

WORKERS OF ALL COUNTRIES, UNITE!

VII
CONGRESS
OF THE
COMMUNIST
INTERNATIONAL

ABRIDGED STENOGRAPHIC
REPORT OF PROCEEDINGS



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Publishers' Preface

The Seventh Congress of the Communist International was in session from July 25 to August 25, 1935. It was held in the Hall of Columns of the Moscow House of Trade Unions, and had altogether 43 sittings. It was attended by 510 delegates, of whom 371 had the right to vote. Sixty-five Parties affiliated to the Communist International were represented at the Congress.

The agenda proposed by the Presidium of the Executive Committee of the Communist International and unanimously adopted by the Congress was as follows:

1. Report on the activities of the Executive Committee of the Communist International. Speaker, Comrade Pieck.

2. The fascist offensive and the tasks of the Communist International in the fight for the unity of the working class against fascism. Speaker, Comrade Dimitrov.

3. The preparations for imperialist war and the tasks of the Communist International. Speaker, Comrade Ercoli.

4. The results of socialist construction in the U.S.S.R. Speaker, Comrade Manuilsky.

5. Election of leading bodies of the Communist International.

In addition, Comrade Manuilsky delivered a detailed address on Engels in connection with the fortieth anniversary of his death, which occurred during Congress sessions.

Fifty-two delegates spoke in the discussion on the first point of the agenda.

Sixty-seven delegates spoke in the discussion on the second point of the agenda—the report of Comrade Dimitrov.

Thirty delegates spoke in the discussion on the third point of the agenda—the report of Comrade Ercoli.

All the decisions and resolutions of the Congress were adopted unanimously. The leading bodies of the Communist International were likewise elected unanimously.

In view of the great significance of the Seventh Congress of the Communist International for the entire international labour movement, the Publishers consider it their duty to reprint the reports and the most important speeches in the discussion in the form of an *abridged stenographic report*. This is all the more important since the reports which were published separately immediately after the Congress have been out of print for quite some time.

In order to make the records of the Congress accessible to large masses of active workers of the working-class organizations, the Publishers have considered it expedient to include in the present report only a small number of the speeches held in the discussion, eliminating everything that is no longer of actual interest. Only Comrade Dimitrov's report, his speech in reply to the discussion, and his concluding speech, as well as Comrade Manuilsky's two speeches, are given in full.

The Publishers

Moscow, end of February, 1939

FIRST SITTING

(July 25, 1935)

ELECTION OF PRESIDUM. ADOPTION OF GREETINGS
TO COMRADE STALIN

Opening: 6:30 p.m.

PIECK: In this hour, when we, representatives of the working people of Europe, Asia, Africa, America and Australia, have gathered in socialist Moscow for the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International, our first thought, our first words, and our first greeting are directed to the Soviet Union and its victorious construction of classless, socialist society; our greetings are addressed to the workers and peasants of the Soviet Union and their advancing shock brigades. We extend greetings, first and foremost, to our great teacher, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and its Bolshevik Central Committee. We extend our most fervent greetings to the great organizer of the victory of socialism on a sixth part of the earth, the leader of all working people fighting for socialism throughout the world, our Comrade Stalin. (*Loud, prolonged ovation, shouts of "Hurrah!"*)

The great historic victory of the Soviet Union, achieved by the working people in bitter struggle under the guidance of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, under the guidance of our friend, teacher and leader, Comrade Stalin, has turned into reality the age-old dream of socialism, which the proletarians of the whole world are striving to fulfil. The victory of socialism in the Soviet Union has enhanced the confidence of the working people of the world in their own power and has swayed the great masses of Social-Democratic workers to make common cause with the Communists in the struggle against the capitalist offensive and the yoke of imperialism, against fascism and the

preparations for a new world imperialist war. As a result of the victory of socialism in the Soviet Union the idea of storming the citadel of capitalism is rapidly maturing in the minds of the masses.

Our thoughts and greetings are directed to the millions of proletarians who, in defiance of death, are waging the struggle against the bestial fascist dictatorship which has robbed the working people of the last vestiges of the most elementary human rights; they are directed above all to that prisoner of the most reactionary, most chauvinist and most bestial of fascist dictatorships, a prisoner who symbolizes the entire anti-fascist struggle, the leader of the German working people, Ernst Thaelmann. (*Loud applause.*) Our thoughts and greetings are directed to Comrade Gramsci (*applause*), who has been languishing for ten years in the dungeons of Italian fascism; to Comrade Rakosi (*applause*), who has been confined for many years in the jails of Hungarian fascism; to Comrade Itsikawa, incarcerated by the reactionary Japanese monarchy. We also send our greetings to the imprisoned leader of the Spanish Socialists, Largo Caballero. (*Applause.*) Our thoughts and greetings are directed to all imprisoned fighters who have shown an example of fearlessness in face of the fascist executioners, of supreme devotion to the cause of the struggle for the emancipation of the proletariat.

Eighteen years ago, amid the horrors of the last bloody war, the Russian proletariat, in alliance with the labouring peasantry, led by Comrade Lenin and his Party, overthrew the rule of the exploiter class and ushered in the proletarian revolution with the victorious October insurrection. All world development has been directly influenced by the Socialist October Revolution, which marked a fundamental turn in the history of humanity. World development is now marked by the struggle between two systems, the old capitalist system and the new socialist system. It is marked by the ever increasing influence which the building up of socialism in the Soviet Union exercises upon the destinies of world capitalism, upon the development of the liberation movement of the world proletariat and of the peoples of the colonies and dependent countries.

The victory of socialism in the Soviet Union has given direction to the rising tide of the revolutionary movement of the proletariat throughout the world, and has stimulated the will of the proletariat to fight for power.

The leaders of the Social-Democratic Parties try to intimidate the masses by the prospect of the difficulties of a proletarian revolution, the prospect of civil war and famine. However, while the capitalist

world finds itself confronted with tremendously growing difficulties, the Soviet Union has overcome the difficulties of the reconstruction period, has crushed the resistance of the exploiter class, and has raised the well-being and culture of the masses of the working people. This has contributed to the circumstance that, the more profound the economic crisis becomes in the capitalist countries and the more difficult the position of the masses grows, the more do the proletarians turn to socialism. The bourgeoisie realizes the mortal danger that threatens it as a result of this growing radicalization of the masses, which leads them towards proletarian revolution. This was why the German bourgeoisie established the fascist dictatorship over the proletariat and inflicted a severe defeat upon the latter. But this was only possible because, in consequence of the reformist policy of the Social-Democratic Party, the working class was spilt, and because the Social-Democratic Party itself rejected the struggle against fascism and through its influence in the working class was able to hold the latter back from the struggle. The victory of fascism in Germany encouraged the bourgeoisie of other countries to proceed likewise, and gave impetus to the second great wave of the fascist offensive against the working people.

But the bourgeoisie understands that fascist terror and fascist demagoguery cannot secure its domination for any length of time. It therefore seeks salvation in new wars for a repartition of the world, in order to ensure the existence of capitalism by plundering foreign peoples and foreign countries and by annexing foreign territory.

But the more fascism arms, the more frantically the bourgeoisie arms for new wars, the more rapidly grows the will of the labouring masses to fight against fascism and for socialism.

We, the Communists, are convinced and ardent adherents of the dictatorship of the proletariat and of socialist democracy. Precisely for this reason do we wage a life and death struggle against fascism and against every form of exploitation by the reactionary elements. It is not immaterial to us Communists what political system exists in any particular capitalist country. For we are concerned with safeguarding the interests of the labouring masses.

In countries where remnants of parliamentarism and democratic liberty have survived, the proletariat, despite the heavy oppression of the capitalist system, still has possibilities, meagre though they be, of organizing and fighting openly for its class interests. In countries under fascist dictatorship the proletariat is deprived of every right and even the slightest possibility of fighting legally for its class demands. That is why we Communists fight with might and main for every scrap of

democratic liberty. We join hands with all who are ready to defend these liberties, and we fight for them as a basis for waging our struggle for real, proletarian democracy, for the abolition of exploitation of man by man. We Communists are the real defenders of the national interests of the people. Not the ruling classes who oppress the peoples have the right to speak in their name, but only we, the Communists, who protect the peoples against the yoke of capitalist domination and financial oppression. We Communists have always been in favour of the right of self-determination for every people, even the smallest, and shall continue the fight for it in future.

As a result of the experience of the class struggle of the last few years, and under the influence of the tremendous achievements of socialist construction in the Soviet Union, the working-class masses, particularly the Social-Democratic workers, have begun to enter the path of decisive struggle against the offensive of capital, against fascism and war. A powerful united front movement is growing in all countries, which denotes a turning of the working class from reformism to revolutionary struggle. In a number of countries cooperation between the Communists and the Social-Democrats in defence of the elementary rights and liberties of the labouring masses has already been achieved. Great impetus to united front action and to the intensification of such action was given by the heroic conduct of Comrade Dimitrov at the Leipzig trial, at which he unfurled the banner of the whole working class against fascism and defended the cause of communism, and which he turned into an indictment of fascism. The united front movement is a pledge of still greater successes for the international working class.

Comrades, we have met for the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International after seven years of tremendous class struggles in all parts of the world.

The tremendous upsurge of the class struggle during the last years shows that the international working class is rising to a decisive struggle against the power of capital, that the revolutionary crisis is ripening throughout the world, that the idea of storming the citadel of capitalism is maturing in the minds of the masses. The era of reformism in the labour movement is approaching its end. The Second International is going through a profound crisis. In the whole international labour movement the era of proletarian class struggle has set in. We, the Communist International, are confronted with the task of intensifying our struggle to win over the workers to the side of the revolution; we are confronted with the paramount task of leading and of preparing

the masses for the struggles which may commence in the very near future. Our Congress must elaborate tactics which will rally the labouring masses to the struggle against fascism and against the preparations for a new war, and which will enable us to pass on from the repulse of fascism to the struggle for socialism.

We must re-examine our entire activity during the past years, bring out our weaknesses and our mistakes, and draw the necessary lessons in order to be able to go on with the work of fulfilling our revolutionary tasks at a greater speed than heretofore.

Since the Sixth World Congress death has removed from our midst a number of our best companions-in-arms and comrades. (*The delegates rise, and the orchestra plays the "Funeral March."*)

In paying tribute to these dead comrades we are fulfilling a duty of honour. Their number is so great that I cannot mention all of them. We pay homage to the memory of our dear Clara Zetkin, of our comrades Kirov and Kuibyshev, Sen Katayama, and the thousands of political fighters like Jonny Scheer, Fuerst, Sallai, and countless others, who have been murdered by the bourgeoisie because of their revolutionary activity. We remember the tens of thousands of comrades of the Communist Party of Germany who are languishing in jail; we fight for their lives and their freedom.

Our road is the road of revolution of the peoples against the oppressors and exploiters. Our will is the will of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin. Our goal is socialism for the whole of humanity. Our main slogan is the establishment of Soviet power. From the rostrum of this Congress we call to the working people and to the peasants threatened by ruin, we call to the men and women of every race and colour: Comrades and brothers, rise against your exploiters, rally closely around the only class that is capable of leading you in your struggle. Rally around the world party of communism, around the Communist International. Long live the Communist International and the leader of all the exploited and oppressed, Comrade Stalin!

(*Loud and prolonged applause. Cheers from the Spanish comrades. Shouts of "Hurrah!" The Japanese delegates rise and shout a triple "Banzai!"*)

Comrades, I hereby open the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International.

(*The orchestra plays the "Internationale." The delegates rise to their feet. All sing the "Internationale" in their various languages.*)

In the name of several large delegations, KOPLINIC proposes the election of a Presidium to consist of the following comrades:

Comrade Arndt, Comrade Browder, Comrade Bueno, Comrade Cachin (*loud applause*), Comrade Campbell, Comrade Clark, Comrade Dimitrov (*stormy applause*), Comrade Dolores (*loud applause*), Comrade Ercoli (*applause*), Comrade Ferdi (*applause*), Comrade Florin (*applause*), Comrade Foster (*applause*), Comrade Furini (*applause*), Comrade Antonio Garcio (*applause*), Comrade Gottwald (*applause*), Comrade Raymond Guyot (*applause*), Comrade Henderson, Comrade Koehler, Comrade Kon Sin (*applause*), Comrade Koplenig (*applause*). Comrade Kuusinen (*loud applause*), Comrade Lacerda, Comrade Linderot (*applause*), Comrade Manuilsky (*stormy applause*), Comrade Marty (*loud applause*), Comrade Okano (*loud applause*), Comrade Petkov, Comrade Pieck (*stormy applause*), Comrade Pollitt (*loud applause*), Comrade Ramsi, (*applause*), Comrade Stalin (*stormy, prolonged applause, ovation, shouts of "Hurrah!"*), Comrade Thaelmann (*stormy applause, ovation, shouts of "Hurrah!"*), Comrade Thorez (*stormy applause*), Comrade Chow Ho-sin (*stormy applause*), Comrade Wang Ming (*stormy applause*). The proposed comrades are elected unanimously.

(The elected comrades ascend the platform. Stormy applause lasting many minutes greets Comrade Stalin as he appears on the platform. The orchestra plays. Renewed loud cheers as Comrade Stalin takes his seat. The delegates sing the first two stanzas of the "Internationale." Stormy ovation.)

THOREZ, speaking in the name of the Communist Parties of France, Italy, Poland, Czechoslovakia, Great Britain and South America, moves the election of Comrade Ernst Thaelmann as honorary chairman of the Seventh World Congress. *(The motion is carried as all the delegates join in a stormy ovation.)*

After electing an Editorial Board and Credentials Committee, the Congress unanimously adopts the agenda proposed by the Presidium of the E.C.C.I.

1. Report on the activities of the Executive Committee of the Communist International. Speaker, Comrade Pieck.

2. The fascist offensive and the tasks of the Communist International in the fight for the unity of the working class against fascism. Speaker, Comrade Dimitrov.

3. The preparations for imperialist war and the tasks of the Communist International. Speaker, Comrade Ercoli.

4. The results of socialist construction in the U.S.S.R. Speaker, Comrade Manuilsky.

5. Election of leading bodies of the Communist International.

CHOW HO-SIN: Comrades, I have been charged with the honourable task of conveying greetings to the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International on behalf of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China, the Revolutionary Military Council of the Chinese Red Army, and the fighting masses of the working people of China.

Comrades, our Chinese people is now experiencing unheard of suffering. Its living body is being torn and lacerated by the imperialist invaders. Its vital interests are betrayed by reactionary generals. But these crimes will not pass unavenged. The Chinese people will not allow its great country, which has a history and culture covering five thousand years, to be converted by the imperialists into a colony. The Chinese people, numbering four hundred and fifty million, will never and by no means permit themselves to be reduced to the position of colonial slaves.

Comrades, permit me now to express from this international platform my fervent greetings to the proletariat and the collective farmers of the great Soviet Union, whose wonderful successes in the construction of socialism arouse the admiration of the workers and peasants throughout the world. They have justified with honour their title of shock brigade of the world proletarian revolution. Our militant Red Army greetings to the heroic proletariat and collective farmers of the Soviet Union, who by their heroic feats have covered themselves with undying glory! (*Applause.*)

We are indebted for the world historical victories of the workers and the collective farmers in the U.S.S.R. to the glorious cohort of Bolsheviks, and their Leninist Communist Party, which has been tried in battles, is connected by indissoluble ties with the vast masses of the workers and all the working people, and is led by the man whose name has long been inscribed in the pages of history, a man whose wisdom is profound, whose courage is unexampled, whose energy is inexhaustible, whose love and devotion to the working people is unlimited, and whose deeds are immortal—the great Stalin.

I convey militant Red Army greetings to the Bolshevik Communist Party of the Soviet Union and to the leader and teacher of the working people of the world, Comrade Stalin! (*Prolonged applause.*)

May all the work of the Seventh World Congress be imbued with Stalin's practical spirit, with Stalin's wisdom, with Stalin's faith in the justice of our cause and Stalin's will to victory! Long live the Communist International! Long live the world proletarian revolution! Long live our leader and teacher, Comrade Stalin!

DOLORES: Comrades, I bring fraternal greetings to the Seventh World Congress of our Communist International in the name of the Spanish Communist Party, in the name of the revolutionary proletariat and peasantry, and particularly in the name of the heroic fighters of Asturias.

This Congress will not only enable us to review the rich experience which we have gained during the events that have taken place throughout the world since the Sixth Congress, and which has confirmed the correctness of the political line pursued by our Communist International; it will also enable us to forge out a new and effective weapon for the struggle of the working people, who have borne the whole burden of capitalist exploitation and all the degradation of the despicable rule of tyranny and brutality which the fascist regime represents.

Today, at the opening of our Seventh World Congress, we extend our heartiest greetings to Comrade Stalin, to our Communist International, to Comrade Dimitrov—the pride of all anti-fascists, to Comrade Thaelmann, to all the anti-fascists who are pining in dungeons, who are tortured and persecuted, to the Communist Party of the Soviet Union and to the Communist Party of China.

We remember all who have fallen in the struggle against capitalism, all who have met their death at the hands of counter-revolutionary murderers, as in the case of our dear Comrade Kirov, whose memory we shall honour and whose death we shall avenge by fighting as he did against the rule of the bourgeoisie and for our own government, the government of the workers and peasants, for the triumph of socialism throughout the world.

And, lastly, fraternal greetings to all the comrades who are present here as delegates, especially those who have come from countries where fascism is trying with its bloody talons to tear the hearts out of the breasts of the working people.

Long live the Seventh Congress of the Communist International! Long live the world revolution and its leader, Comrade Stalin! (*Applause. Music.*)

(A delegation of one hundred workers from the big factories of Moscow now enter the hall with their flags.)

SOKOLOV (Kaganovich Ball-Bearing Works, Moscow): Comrades, permit me to convey to the Staff of the world proletarian revolution, the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International, and through it to all Parties of the workers and to the working class of the whole

world, the warmest and most heartfelt Communist greetings of the workers of the Red capital of the international proletariat. (*Loud applause, shouts of "Hurrah!" and of "Rot Front!"*)

Under the leadership of our Bolshevik Party, under the guidance of Comrade Stalin, the leader of our Party, we have achieved enormous successes on all fronts of socialist construction. Old Russia, poverty-stricken, miserable, uncultured Russia as it was before, under tsardom, has become a country building socialism, a country which has come to the Seventh Congress of the Communist International with great victories.

Comrades, take the message to all proletarian men and women and to all our class brothers and sisters languishing in the torture chambers of the fascist prisons, that our victory is assured. The guarantee of our victory lies in the fact that we have the Communist International.

Long live our Communist International!

Long live the leader of the German Communist Party, Comrade Thaelmann! (*Thunderous applause.*)

Long live the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the bulwark of the world proletarian revolution!

Long live our great and beloved Comrade Stalin! Hurrah! (*Applause, shouts of "Hurrah!"; the orchestra plays the "Internationale."*)

(*A group of parachute jumpers, with their parachutes strapped on, march into the hall to the strains of the "Aviators' March." The delegates rise from their seats and sing the "Aviators' March." Resounding shouts of "Hurrah!" fill the hall.*)

PENKIN: Comrades, on behalf of the parachute jumpers and of the working-class and collective-farm youth of our great Soviet country, trained by the Leninist Young Communist League, I bring ardent, militant proletarian greetings to the best representatives of the heroic working class abroad, to the dear and beloved champions of our class. (*Loud applause, shouts of "Hurrah!"*)

Long live the Communist International, the organizer of the international proletarian revolution!

Hail the Seventh Congress of the Communist International, at which the revolutionary forces of the international proletariat will pass in review!

Long live our Stalin, the leader of the Leninist Party, the leader of the peoples of the Soviet Union, the champion of the world proletariat! (*Applause, shouts of "Hurrah!"; the "Internationale" is sung.*)

NINA KAMNEVA: Comrades, I am proud of the high honour of bringing the warmest greetings to you, the best sons of the Communist International, on behalf of the girl comrades of the Y.C.L. in the Land of Soviets. (*Applause.*) Like all the working people, like the entire Leninist-Stalinist Young Communist League, which has been awarded the Order of the Red Banner, we follow with unremitting attention the life and struggle of the proletariat abroad. The heroic conduct of our class brothers at the Leipzig trial filled us with enthusiasm. (*Applause.*) Our hearts were with the miners of Asturias. We rejoice at every success of the Chinese Red Army. The girls of the Soviet Union never for a moment forget the leader of the German proletariat, Ernst Thaelmann, and the thousands of other revolutionary fighters pining in the fascist dungeons. If today it is impossible for our flowers to reach them, we hope that the news of our successes may penetrate to them in their prison solitude and serve as our proletarian greeting to them. (*Applause.*)

We ask the Communist International to tell our sisters who are fighting against bestial fascism, and who are languishing in the prisons, that we remember them, that we are always with them.

Long live the world proletarian revolution! (*Applause.*)

Long live the Communist International, storming the citadels of capitalism (*applause*)—the Communist International, with Comrade Stalin at its head! (*Loud and prolonged applause.*)

(A delegation of Young Pioneers enters the hall.)

YOUNG PIONEER PAVLENKO: Pioneer greetings to the world Congress of the Communist International from the children of the proletarian capital! (*Applause.*)

We, the children of the Soviet Union, the happiest country in the world, feel the constant solicitude for us of the Party, the government, and our beloved leader, Comrade Stalin.

Comrade Stalin is the best friend of us children, of all the children in the world. It is he who builds for us the best schools, palaces of culture, stadiums and camps, where we can become strong and healthy so that we can study more and better in the winter time, when we go to school.

We must grow up as fighters worthy to take the place of those now present here (*applause*)—as fighters devoted to the cause of the Party, devoted to the cause of the Communist International. (*Applause.*)

Long live our beloved Stalin (*Applause.*)
Young Pioneers! For the workers' cause stand ready!
Always ready! (*Thunderous applause.*)

CACHIN: Comrades. I am charged with the inspiring task of replying, in the name of the delegates present at the Seventh Congress, to the greetings and pledges of our comrades from the factories, the parachute jumpers, and the Young Pioneers of Moscow.

We address ourselves first of all to the delegates from the big factories represented here, and through them to the millions of working men and women of the Soviet Union.

We who have come to this Congress from all countries of the world at the call of our Communist International express our enthusiastic admiration for the men and women who are building socialism, for the seventy nations of the Soviet Union.

The magnificent accomplishments of the two Five-Year Plans fill the proletarians of all the world with joy and pride. Heroically overcoming innumerable difficulties, fighting against ruthless enemies inside and outside the country, you have built up, at the cost of superhuman effort, an industry such as the most powerful capitalist countries took centuries to build. You have the right to be proud of your unexampled success. You have shown that socialism is not a dream but living reality. Your example has shown that socialism is the only social system that can abolish unemployment, misery, crises—these most terrible scourges of capitalism. You are building up human civilization, while imperialism has degraded and befouled civilization, and in its death convulsions it is sinking almost everywhere to terror, shame, reaction, fascism.

Comrades, I have often had the privilege of visiting your busy factories. I have met with the men and women working in your factories, and on each occasion they have asked why their French brothers and their brothers in other countries are so slow in following their example. We can reply today that we are at the threshold of historic events which will change the face of the world. Our Seventh Congress is a true revolutionary preparation for the struggles which are looming ahead, and from which the working class, guided by its Communist International, must emerge as victor in the fight for world communism.

I should also like to address a few words to our young friends, the Pioneers, who have greeted us here so charmingly. Ah! How happy are these children of the revolution, as they have told us here. They are the heirs of a generation which fought to ensure their joy and

peace, to create for them a society which will be worth living in. They must never forget the sacrifices made by their elders. They must guard the heritage bequeathed to them against all attacks.

As for the thousands of girls and youths of the Soviet Union who joyfully brave the perils of the air, the proletarians of all countries bow to their unparalleled courage. No other nation in the world can boast of young people more audacious and daring.

Comrades of Moscow, the Sections of the Communist International have never been more attached to their fatherland, the Soviet Union, which welcomes them today so fraternally, than they are in this historic hour.

The Soviet Union is considerably ahead of the rest of the world as a revolutionary country: but, as our ancestors in France found out by experience a century ago, those who are in the vanguard of humanity are always beset by grave danger.

The fascists cynically announce that the hour has struck when they are ready to hurl themselves at the socialist fatherland. In vain does the U.S.S.R. repeat at every opportunity its proposals for a lasting peace. In spite of the fact that for the thousandth time it has given proof of its sincere desire for peace, it is still menaced as on the first day of its existence. With its Red soldiers, who, like those of Valmy, marched to battle barefoot, it repulsed all the enemies who attacked it at its very birth, in 1917 to 1920. But now, after eighteen years of heroic work, it has forged the invulnerable and invincible armour of the Red Army. (*Applause.*)

As for us, who represent here the best of the working people of the whole world, tonight we renew our solemn oath to work with all our strength and shrink from no sacrifice for the defence and the victory of the Soviet Union.

We shall defend the work of Lenin, the work of Stalin, the work of the Soviet workers and collective farmers, as the most precious treasure of the international proletariat and of all mankind. (*Applause.*)

ERCOLI, speaking on behalf of all the delegates, moves that the following greetings be sent by the Congress to Comrade Stalin:

TO COMRADE STALIN, LEADER, TEACHER, AND FRIEND OF THE
PROLETARIAT AND OPPRESSED OF THE WHOLE WORLD

In the name of millions of fighters in the ranks of the proletarian world revolution, in the name of the working people of all lands, we address ourselves to you, Comrade Stalin, our leader,

faithful continuer of the work of Marx, Engels and Lenin, to you who, together with Lenin, forged out a party of a new type, the Party of the Bolsheviks, the Party which led to the triumph of the great October proletarian Revolution and to the victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R. We address our ardent greetings to you, beloved leader of the whole international proletariat and of all the oppressed.

More than ten years have passed since the day we lost Lenin, that giant of revolutionary thought and action, the unforgettable leader of the world revolution. It fell to your lot, Comrade Stalin, to take over the gigantic task and to replace him at the helm of the struggle for the liberation of the whole of labouring humanity.

Under your leadership socialism has triumphed in the U.S.S.R., and an impregnable basis for the cause of the world proletarian revolution has been created. At Lenin's tomb you took the oath to consolidate and extend the alliance of the working people of the whole world—the Communist International; and the Communists of all countries, following your leadership, are fulfilling this oath in their heroic struggle.

Now, when the capitalist world is entering a new round of wars and revolutions, the proletariat, in contradistinction to its situation in the first round of wars and revolutions, possesses the surest guarantee of final victory—the powerful Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, the country of victorious socialism, and the Communist International, the monolithic world party of communism.

Under your leadership the U.S.S.R. has become an impregnable stronghold of the socialist revolution, a stronghold of the fight against fascism and reaction and of the fight against war. Let the bourgeois gentlemen attempt today to ask the peoples of the world whether they want peace or war, fascism or socialism. The peoples of the world do not want war, do not want fascism. They are turning more and more towards the U.S.S.R.; they are turning their eyes, full of hope and love, to you, Comrade Stalin, the leader of the working people of all countries.

The victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R. has heightened the prestige of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the eyes of millions of working people, has given a tremendous force to the program, the strategy and the tactics of the Communist International.

The victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R. opens up a new phase in the world proletarian revolution.

Our heroic fighters in Germany, in China, in Japan, in Spain, in Poland, in Italy and in other countries, are leading the masses

to the struggle, with your name, Comrade Stalin, in their hearts. It is this name that fills them with confidence in the triumph of our cause.

The victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R. is a great victory of communism over reformism, of the Communist International over the bankrupt Second International.

You have taught us and are teaching us that the only correct policy is a policy faithful to our principles. Thanks to its unswerving Bolshevik policy, the Communist International has achieved wonderful unity and firmness in its ranks. In your struggle against the counter-revolutionary Trotskyites and Zinovievites, in the struggle against the Right and "Left" opportunists, you, Comrade Stalin, have defended the Marxist-Leninist doctrine and have developed this doctrine under the conditions of the new phase of the world revolution which will live in history as the era of Stalin.

You have taught and are teaching us Communists the Bolshevik art of combining unshakable fidelity to our principles with closest contact with the masses, and an irreconcilable revolutionary spirit with the necessary flexibility.

Following your teachings, the Communist Parties will consolidate their connections with the masses in every way, they will rouse and lead the millions, will organize a wide proletarian united front, and will weld together the People's Front against fascism and war and the front of anti-imperialist struggle in the colonial and semi-colonial countries.

The Seventh World Congress of the Communist International, in the name of sixty-five Communist Parties, assures you, Comrade Stalin, that the Communists will always and everywhere be faithful to the end to the great and invincible banner of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin. Under this banner communism will triumph throughout the world.

Seventh World Congress
of the Communist International

(The text of the greeting is unanimously adopted amid a storm of applause and cheers in honour of Comrade Stalin.)

SECOND SITTING

(July 26, 1935)

REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

Opening: 11 a. m.

Presiding: Gottwald

GOTTWALD: I hereby open the second sitting of the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International. We have on the agenda the report on the activities of the Executive Committee of the Communist International. I call upon Comrade Pieck, who will report on behalf of the Executive Committee. (*Comrade Pieck is greeted with applause.*)

THE ACTIVITIES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

(Report by Comrade Pieck)

HISTORICAL TEST OF THE TWO PATHS OF DEVELOPMENT

Comrades, seven years of hard and costly struggle waged by the labouring masses against their oppressors and their exploiters separate the Sixth World Congress of the Communist International from the Seventh. These seven years have brought about a great change in the relation of class forces all over the world and have provided the proletariat with extremely rich revolutionary experiences.

Our Sixth World Congress was faced with the decisive question: Whither is international development tending?

This question likewise faced the Congress of the Second Interna-

tional which was being held in Brussels at the same time. It was also being asked by the bourgeois economists and politicians.

It was the time of the relative, partial stabilization of capitalism, when industry and commerce had surpassed the pre-war level and were experiencing a boom.

What reply did the Social-Democrats give to the question as to the prospects of international development?

Because capitalism had to a certain extent succeeded in getting back into its swing, because production, technique and commerce were on the upgrade and relations between the imperialist powers had been regulated by a system of international treaties, the Social-Democratic leaders concluded that the era of revolutions and wars had come to an end, that the Bolsheviks and their theory and practice had suffered bankruptcy and that the Soviet Union would have to capitulate to the international bourgeoisie or perish.

But the Social-Democrats also drew a further conclusion: since an era of "organized capitalism," of permanent prosperity and peaceful development is impending, the Marxist theory of the class struggle and of the violent overthrow of the rule of the bourgeoisie has become antiquated and must be replaced by the theory of peaceful growth into socialism by means of strengthening the power of the state, which allegedly stands above classes, by means of economic peace and participation in coalition governments.

But this was the position not only of official Social-Democracy. Its influence penetrated even into our ranks. The Right elements in the Sections of the Communist International defended the theory that the trend of international development was towards strengthening the stabilization of capitalism, that capitalism had succeeded in readjusting itself and that the development of technique was creating the possibility of a new rise of capitalism. The Rights also asserted that an early victory of socialism in the Soviet Union was not to be counted on and that a new rise of the revolutionary tide in the near future was not to be expected.

As against these Social-Democratic and Right opportunist conceptions of the course of development in the Soviet Union, Comrade Stalin—basing himself on the Leninist theory that it is possible for one country alone to build a socialist society with its own forces and that the victory of socialism in the Soviet Union is of great international importance—led the Soviet Union along the path of industrialization and along the path of the collectivization of peasant farming.

As against the Social-Democratic and Right opportunist conceptions

that the capitalist stabilization was a durable and firm one, that capitalism had triumphed and that a peaceful development without crises was possible. Comrade Stalin, already in December 1927, pictured the following prospect:

"From stabilization itself, from the fact that production is growing, from the fact that commerce is growing, from the fact that technical progress and production possibilities are increasing, whereas the world market, the limits of that market and the spheres of influence of the individual imperialist groups are remaining more or less stable—precisely from this a most profound and acute crisis of world capitalism is springing, pregnant with new wars and threatening the existence of stabilization of any kind."¹

Comrade Stalin said:

"The fact that the murder of Sacco and Vanzetti could give rise to the demonstrations of the working class undoubtedly goes to show that down in the depths of the working class there have accumulated revolutionary energies that are seeking and will seek a pretext, an occasion, sometimes an apparently most insignificant occasion to burst forth and fling themselves on the capitalist regime."²

On the basis of this correct Marxist-Leninist analysis of the world situation given by Comrade Stalin, the Sixth World Congress of the Communist International, as against the Social-Democrats and Right opportunists, laid down an orientation to the effect that the impending new third period of post-war development would be a period of accentuation of all the contradictions of capitalism, a period of a new revolutionary upsurge, a period in which the stabilization of capitalism would be shaken. We pointed out that what was impending was not a peaceful development, but an accentuation of the class struggle and the growing danger of a new imperialist war.

Who Was Right: We or the Social-Democrats?

The Social-Democrats and the Right opportunists have suffered bankruptcy; their theories have been miserably shipwrecked.

The prospect of world development outlined by the Sixth World Congress of the Communist International, the prospect of the victorious building of socialism in the Soviet Union and the shattering of

¹ J. Stalin, *Report to the Fifteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.)*.

² *Ibid.*

capitalist stabilization, has been confirmed by the whole course of development.

In my report on the activities of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, I shall stress two large groups of questions: the results of the work carried on by the Communists among the masses, and the development of our Party work.

For the sake of greater clarity, I shall divide the period covered by the report into three stages, corresponding to the development of the class struggle and the prevalence in each stage of definite forms of the revolutionary movement:

- 1) The maturing of a new upsurge in the revolutionary movement.
- 2) The revolutionary movement in the years of greatest crisis.
- 3) The turn of the Socialist workers towards a united front with the Communists.

I. THE MATURING OF A NEW UPSURGE IN THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT

The Economic and Political Struggles of the Proletariat

Within a few months after the Sixth Congress a wave of economic strikes, such as had not been witnessed for a long time, broke out in all the European countries. In Lodz, there began one of the biggest textile workers' strikes in the history of the Polish working-class movement, which turned into a general strike of the proletariat of Lodz. In the Ruhr, 200,000 workers fought for five weeks for an increase in wages. In Northern France, the textile workers went on strike. The parliamentary elections in Germany, Poland and France showed a considerable increase in the number of votes cast for the Communists, which was evidence of the growing political character of the upsurge that had begun.

This new revolutionary upsurge was by no means confined to the European countries. It was reflected in the anti-imperialist and the agrarian revolution in China and in the national-revolutionary and working-class movement in India.

The movement showed that the broad masses of the working people, who had recovered from the defeats of the years 1921-23, were not willing to accept the further impairment of their conditions brought about by rationalization and the general crisis of capitalism. It was true that capitalist production was strongly on the upgrade; but the condition of the working class was growing markedly worse. It was

true that a section of the employed workers were receiving higher wages than in the earlier post-war years; but, on the other hand, exploitation due to rationalization had become incredibly intensified and a large number of workers had been forced out of the production process.

The Socialists talked about "prosperity," but unemployment increased. The Socialists talked about "economic democracy," but sweating in the factories was becoming unendurable. The Social-Democrats prated about "organized capitalism" which was overcoming its internal difficulties, but class antagonisms were growing daily more acute and were resulting in a growth of the class struggle.

The Social-Democrats in all countries placed themselves entirely at the service of the development of capitalist economy. The prospect they held out of the development of capitalist economy into socialism they deduced from the growth and success of capitalism at that time. Hence their theory of the possibility of "permanent prosperity," of a "development without crises," of "organized capitalism," and "industrial democracy," under which the workers and the employers were to be "equal parties" in the settlement of economic questions. In some countries the Social-Democrats called this "constructive socialism," in accordance with which the growth of capitalist economy, it was supposed, would lead to socialism by way of parliamentary democracy and coalition governments.

Guided by these views, the Social-Democrats strove for still closer relations with the bourgeois state, and in Germany, Great Britain and Denmark took part in the capitalist governments. Furthermore, the Social-Democrats became interlocked with the heads of the trusts and had posts on boards of directors conferred on them by the bourgeoisie. The natural consequence of this was that the Social-Democrats advocated restriction of the class struggle, industrial peace, and endeavoured to prevent strikes by the workers. All matters affecting the economic interests of the working class were to be decided by state arbitration courts.

From this stand taken by the Social-Democratic leaders, and in view of the commanding position held by the bourgeoisie in relation to the working class, it followed automatically that the proletariat would have been completely delivered over to the tender mercies of the bourgeoisie and would have remained without any leadership whatsoever in its economic struggles, had not the Communists vigorously opposed the collaboration of the Social-Democrats with the bourgeoisie by the class struggle and had they not attempted to organize a revolutionary leadership of the economic and political struggles of the proletariat.

Because of the necessity of defending the vital interests of the labouring masses, of intensifying their ability to fight increasing exploitation and oppression, because of the necessity of rallying the masses for this struggle, there devolved on the Communists, as the Ninth Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International in 1928 stated, the task of laying down a more precise and distinct

“political line of their own, fundamentally differing from the line of the reformists both on all general political questions (war, attitude towards the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, China, India, Egypt, etc.) and on questions of the day-to-day struggle of the working class (against arbitration, against wage reductions, against a longer working day, against supporting the capitalists in the matter of rationalization, against ‘industrial peace,’ etc.).”

In tactics, this political line of the Communists found expression in the slogan “class against class”—the class of proletarians against the class of the bourgeoisie.

The tactics of “class against class” were directed against the bloc of the Social-Democrats with the bourgeoisie and aimed at destroying the bloc of the Social-Democratic leaders with the bourgeoisie. These tactics were not aimed against the united front of the Communists with the Socialists for the struggle against the bourgeoisie, but, on the contrary, presupposed it. They aimed at creating a revolutionary leadership of the economic and political struggles of the proletariat.

Laying down a sharp line of demarcation between the reformist and the Communist policies, which is absolutely necessary and is one of the essential foundations of our tactics of “class against class,” by no means precludes the policy of Communists, while conducting their independent election campaigns, undertaking at elections—for instance, in Great Britain—to support the Labour candidates who vote in favour of the urgent demands of the working class, or, as in France, concluding election agreements with the Socialists in special cases in order to prevent the election of reactionary candidates. Unless such a united front of the workers against the capitalists is created, it is impossible to defend effectively the vital interests of the workers in the struggle against the bourgeoisie.

The tactics of “class against class” strengthened the Communist Parties and enabled them to appear before the working class as an independent force in the leadership of the class struggle. In Great Britain, the Communists for the first time began to carry on independently big mass campaigns all over the country. In France, the Com-

munists set themselves up as an independent factor against the Left bloc. And it was only by determinedly pursuing an independent line that the Communist Party of Germany was able to carry with it large sections of the masses who were turning away from Social-Democracy, to organize tremendous strike actions and demonstrations and to build up a powerful front of the revolutionary class struggle.

But these successes must not blind us to the fact that in pursuing these tactics of "class against class" a number of sectarian mistakes were committed. While the Communists in Great Britain were right in putting up their independent candidates against the Labour Party leaders in the parliamentary elections and fighting on their behalf, it was wrong for this small Communist Party to concentrate all its attention on its own candidates and to make but little effort to have candidates put up by labour conferences of local trade union and Labour Party branches. While the Communists in Germany acted rightly in definitely dissociating themselves from the Social-Democrats and conducting a ruthless struggle against Zoergiebel and Severing, it was wrong of Communists to dissociate themselves also from the Social-Democratic workers and to call them "little Zoergiebels."

Owing to this defective application of our tactics of "class against class," and frequently even to the distorted idea that these tactics supposedly precluded the united front, our Sections in this stage of the struggle failed to achieve the success they might have achieved. It was only when the upsurge in the strike movement began and the Social-Democrats opposed this movement, set the state arbitration machinery in motion and began to stifle the strikes, that the revolutionary tactics of the Communists gained the sympathies of large numbers of workers. Our Sections began to understand how important for the struggle of the workers was the organization of independent strike committees elected by the workers themselves.

True, the Communists here came into conflict with the reformist trade union leaders, who, by referring to trade union discipline and by threatening expulsion, tried to prevent the Communists from organizing the strike struggle. But under no circumstances could the Communists renounce the struggle on behalf of the demands of the masses, and the organization of their struggles, out of respect for such trade union discipline.

The Communists, who assumed the lead of a number of large strikes and numerous small strikes, organized picket lines and demonstrations and raised the masses from economic struggles to political struggles, therein displayed a very strong fighting spirit and themselves

bore the main brunt of the sacrifices. Thanks to this, they gained considerable influence among the working-class masses and in all the mass organizations of the workers.

The Consequences of Sectarian Mistakes

But here too the Communists committed many sectarian errors. They were unable to clinch their influence organizationally in the reformist organizations and among the unorganized workers. By organizing strike struggles, the Communists strengthened the spirit of class struggle among the proletariat, although the Social-Democrats were advocating economic peace and preaching "Mondism" and the like. Nevertheless, the Communists frequently committed the mistake of continuing a strike even after the majority of the strikers had returned to work. As a result, they frequently isolated themselves from the broad working-class masses.

With the slogan demanding independent leadership of strikes by the revolutionary minority, the Communists helped to bring about strikes and to free revolutionary trade union work from the fetters of the reformist trade union apparatus. But in carrying out this slogan the first essential task of the revolutionary minority was ignored, namely, to secure the consent of the majority of the workers of a given factory to the declaration of a strike and to create an independent strike leadership elected by the strikers themselves.

Although the Communists acted rightly in coming out against the traditional aristocratic attitude of the reformists towards the unorganized workers, and in favour of drawing the unorganized workers into the strikes and strike committees, nevertheless, a number of Communists, particularly in Germany, made the mistake of underrating the importance of the organized workers and the influence of the reformist trade unions not only among the organized, but also among the unorganized workers.

The Red International of Labour Unions was right in setting the task of smashing the monopolist claim of the reformist trade union bureaucracy to decide on economic struggles, a monopoly it utilized only in order to prevent such struggles. But the decision of the Strassburg Conference at the beginning of 1929 went beyond this aim when it declared that "it is the task of the strike leadership and strike committees independently to prepare for and to lead the strike struggles in spite of and in opposition to the reformist trade unions." This also applies to the instruction that "in the election of committees of action

in the case of lockouts, and of strike committees and other organs of struggle, all persons connected with Social-Democracy and the trade union bureaucracy are to be rejected on the grounds that they are strikebreakers."

The experience of the struggle has also shown that, under the pressure of the increasing sentiment of the masses in favour of a strike, the reformist trade union leaders have not always been able to reject the strike, and therefore the tactics of the united front were both feasible and necessary. The opportunists in our ranks advocated the view that in the matter of strikes pressure must be brought to bear on the reformist trade union bureaucracy through the trade union members, but that in the event of the trade union leaders rejecting the strike, their decisions must be abided by. It goes without saying that we had to combat this opportunist view. But, on the other hand, it was a mistake to think that it was opportunism to exert pressure on the reformist trade union bureaucracy at all through the trade union members, which was the interpretation given to our opposition to the Brandlerite slogan, "Zwingt die Bonzen" ("Make the leaders fight"), in Germany and later in other countries. The revolutionary minority concentrated all its attention on independent leadership of strikes, but in doing so it lost sight of such a duty as participating in strike movements led by the reformist trade union leaders, as work facilitating the acquisition of a firm influence over the majority of the workers participating in these strike movements.

In spite of these sectarian mistakes, the influence of the Communists among the organized working-class masses grew very rapidly. It was for this reason that the reformist trade union leaders began to expel Communists from the trade unions in Germany, Great Britain, the United States and in a number of other countries.

This policy of the reformists demanded the organized consolidation of the Revolutionary Trade Union Opposition, particularly in Germany and Poland; and indeed, in 1928 and in 1929, certain successes were achieved. But here again a sectarian mistake was committed: the Revolutionary Trade Union Opposition was transformed into new trade unions and, as a result, found itself isolated from the bulk of the membership of the reformist trade unions. Another mistake was that our Sections in other countries mechanically took over this decision of the German Communist Party, ignoring the absolutely different concrete situation existing in their own particular countries.

The most glaring example of sectarianism in the trade union movement was provided in Great Britain, where in the face of the sharp

attacks of the Right members of the General Council and the vacillations of the Left trade union leaders the Communists adopted such clumsy and sectarian tactics that the Minority Movement actually fell to pieces. Adopting the course of independently leading the economic struggles, the Communists, as a result of former Right mistakes and the inadequate organizational consolidation of the Minority Movement, transferred their main work from the trade union groups to individual members and from the trade unions to the unorganized workers, and set up their scanty forces against the whole trade union movement. These mistakes were aggravated by the fact that the Communists regarded the Minority Movement as the nucleus of new trade unions and discontinued recruiting workers for the trade unions, issuing appeals to join the ranks of the Minority Movement. It must be borne in mind that these mistakes were committed by our comrades in a country where the reformist trade unions possess the oldest traditions. Under such circumstances the Communists were bound to become entirely isolated from the trade union movement, and the Minority Movement collapsed. It is only with great difficulty that our British comrades, having realized their mistakes and correspondingly altered their trade union policy, are managing to regain their influence in the trade union movement.

It was precisely the fact that the strength of the traditions that bind the working-class masses to the old trade union organizations was underrated, and that the main stress in our work was laid on strengthening the Red trade unions and on building a revolutionary trade union opposition, that resulted in the Communists for several years neglecting work in the reformist trade unions, although such work was quite feasible. It was natural that this should have very severely hindered the spread of our influence among the masses of organized trade unionists.

In spite of all this, the fact remains that in the pre-crisis period, especially when the economic strike was the principal form of development of the class struggle, the Communists were the chief initiators and leaders of the strike struggle in a number of countries. During this period the Communist Parties gained in political strength, and their ideological influence among the masses markedly increased. But they still did not become a force that was fully able to utilize the new situation that had come about with the outbreak of the economic crisis in the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat.

This leads me to the second stage of the struggle in the period under review, the stage embracing the revolutionary movement in the years of greatest crisis.

II. THE REVOLUTIONARY MOVEMENT IN THE YEARS OF GREATEST CRISIS

In the autumn of 1929 the industrial crisis began in America. It became interwoven with the agrarian crisis in the peasant countries and the crisis in the colonies, and spread with extraordinary rapidity all over the capitalist world.

This crisis brought appalling misery to the labouring masses. Many millions of industrial workers and salaried employees were discharged from factories, mines, and offices.

In every country the wages of employed workers fell. Millions of workers were put on part-time work with corresponding reductions in wages. Skilled workers were reduced to the standard of living of unskilled workers and employed workers to the standard of living of unemployed workers.

The working class, which created all the wealth of modern society, sank to a state of poverty unknown in the memory of man.

But the poverty and want of the toiling peasantry became no less acute. In order to plunder the peasant masses monopoly capital, the trusts and the banks lowered the price of the produce of peasant agriculture, while maintaining the former level of prices for manufactured goods. The banks ruthlessly collected interest on loans and mortgage debts. The burden of taxation steadily increased, since the state gave subsidies to the insolvent banks and trusts.

This policy of plundering the peasants accelerated the deterioration of peasant farming, totally ruining tens of thousands of peasant households and condemning millions of households to languish in misery. In a number of countries elements of the feudal system have been restored or strengthened. The poorest strata of the peasantry have fallen prey to the usurers. The court bailiff has become a permanent "guest" in the peasant farms. Whole agricultural regions in Poland, North-Eastern Japan, and the Carpathian Ukraine are afflicted with famine. Poverty and want have become the lot of a large section of the American farmers.

The horror of the situation is emphasized by the fact that warehouses and corn-bins in all countries are bursting with grain, grain is being used as fuel for locomotives, coffee is being dumped into the sea, while the producer of these commodities—the peasant—starves. . . .

No better is the situation of the urban lower middle classes, whose impoverishment is taken advantage of by the trusts and big capitalists in order to seize the property of the middle classes. The middle class

intellectuals are steadily losing their means of subsistence; thousands of teachers, doctors, lawyers, and especially engineers and agronomists are leading a wretched existence as unemployed. Knowledge and ability lose all meaning when capitalists are unable to derive profit from them.

But still more desperate has become the situation of the peoples of the colonies and the dependent countries, who, owing to the still greater reduction in the price of the product of their labour, under the pressure of imperialist monopoly, and as the result of the high price of manufactured articles, have been literally ruined. Hundreds of millions of peasants in the colonies are starving. Epidemics, which were considered to have been eradicated, break out with new virulence and physically exterminate the exhausted population. The hunger and want of the unemployed of China, India, Indo-China and Africa, for whom no relief of any kind is provided, baffles description.

The avarice of the imperialist bourgeoisie, which has no concern for the starving masses, started a steadily rising tide of movements of the working people against their exploiters and tormentors. These movements have become an increasing menace to the domination of the imperialists in the colonies and the dependent countries.

The Imperialist Bourgeoisie is Seeking a Way Out in War and Fascism

The imperialist bourgeoisie cannot confine itself to plundering the labouring masses of its own countries and the colonial possessions it has seized. The accentuation of the class struggles, the shrinkage of profits, bankruptcies, and the decline of foreign trade drive the bourgeoisie to make preparations for a war in order to increase its profits by seizing and plundering foreign countries. These preparations are simultaneously and primarily designed for the destruction of the Soviet Union, the home, the basis and the bulwark of the proletarian revolution. Thus a frantic race for armaments begins.

Japan seizes Manchuria in order to create a jumping-off place for a war against the Soviet Union. She razes Chapei, the proletarian suburb of Shanghai, to the ground, in order to bring China under her influence. War breaks out between Paraguay and Bolivia.

In Germany, the most reactionary, chauvinistic and nationalist elements of finance capital set up a fascist dictatorship. They propagate "the myth of blood and honour," the "race theory," the theory of belligerent German imperialism. They preach a crusade against the

Soviet Union and for the extermination of Marxism all over the world.

Italian imperialism makes preparations for the annexation of Abyssinia, thereby creating a new centre of war.

Indeed, when it is a question of increasing its profits, or, all the more, when it is a question of arresting the decline of profits, the bourgeoisie is prepared to commit the most heinous, gruesome and bloody crimes.

Nevertheless, the growing revolutionary upsurge and the increasing sympathy of the labouring masses for the Soviet Union, on the one hand, and the unprecedented plundering of the masses, the frantic arming for a new war and the organization of fascist forces by the bourgeoisie, on the other, go to show that tremendous class conflicts are impending.

The first symptoms of the approach of these conflicts were manifested as early as 1930 and 1931. In Spain, the powerful and spontaneous mass movement in the spring of 1931 overthrew the fascist dictatorship and drove out King Alfonso. It was the beginning of the Spanish bourgeois-democratic revolution.

In China, a new wave of anti-imperialist and agrarian revolution started, which found expression in the formation of Soviets and the creation of a powerful Red Army.

In Indo-China, a revolt of the peasant masses broke out against the yoke of imperialism.

But a profound disturbance of the imperialist system was proceeding in the largest imperialist countries as well.

The Working Class is Seeking a Way Out in Revolution

The Communist International drew the attention of all toilers to the fact that in the Soviet Union the dictatorship of the proletariat had put an end to unemployment in the towns and to pauperism in the country, that the condition of the labouring masses was improving from day to day and that in the Soviet Union socialism was victorious.

The Soviet Union showed the labouring masses the only path of salvation from poverty, want and incredible suffering. This path is the path of salvation from fascism and war.

The task that the Communist International laid upon its Sections was to make the mighty example given to the labouring masses of the world by the Soviet Union known to these masses, to make the great lesson afforded by this example part of the flesh and blood of these masses.

This example was to signify that the labouring masses must abandon all the fraudulent theories of the bourgeoisie and the Social-Democrats, that inculcate in the working class the idea that since crises are natural to capitalism the working class should meekly consent to bear the whole burden of the crises; theories that inculcate in the labouring masses the idea that since wars are natural to capitalism, they cannot prevent them; theories that inculcate in the labouring masses the idea that since the development of decaying capitalism is leading to fascism, the latter is inevitable.

The immediate tactical task of the Communists during the crisis was to organize the struggle to prevent the burden of the crisis from being laid on the backs of the starving masses. The central strategic point of the struggle in connection with these tactics lay in Germany.

But the working class entered this struggle internally divided. In every country the Social-Democratic Party, the oldest and largest workers' party, was corroded by the rust of reformism and, in the conditions of the crisis, stood for class collaboration with the bourgeoisie. Only the comparatively young and, in many countries, still insufficiently influential Communist Party stood for irreconcilable class struggle.

Class collaboration with the bourgeoisie or class struggle—this controversy was still rending the ranks of the proletariat and enfeebling its forces.

The Struggle of the Unemployed

In spite of the Social-Democrats, the Communists in a number of countries succeeded in raising *the movement of the unemployed*—that most ill-treated section of the working people—to a high level. In countries where government unemployment insurance existed, as in Germany, Great Britain, Poland, Czechoslovakia and Austria, the Communists took the lead of the struggle against attempts to impair the insurance system, against a reduction of rates of insurance and its duration, and against the replacement of unemployment insurance by crisis relief. In the United States, where there is no state unemployment insurance, the Communists developed a campaign for the introduction of such insurance, drafted an insurance bill, organized demonstrations, meetings and congresses on its behalf and gained the support of trade unions and advanced intellectuals for this.

As a result of this struggle, it became possible in a number of countries to ease the lot of a section of the unemployed and to offer

vigorous resistance to the impairment of social insurance legislation. However, it was not possible to prevent such impairment.

If, in spite of the stubborn fight put up by the advanced section of the unemployed, this movement was not more widely developed and converted into a struggle of the broad masses of the working people, and if, in 1932, the unemployed movement in a majority of the countries even began to subside, this was owing to the following causes:

- 1) The criminal sabotage and direct resistance shown by the Social-Democratic leaders to the demands and to the movement of the unemployed prevented the securing of a tangible improvement in the condition of the vast mass of the unemployed, with the result that the unemployed became disappointed and passive.

- 2) The Social-Democratic Party prevented support being given to the unemployed movement by a strike movement of the employed workers, who remained passive in face of the poverty, want and starvation of the unemployed.

- 3) We succeeded in enlisting only an insignificant part of the unemployed, about 10 or 20 per cent, in the active struggle, the majority of the unemployed remaining passive.

- 4) Not all the forms and methods of struggle were tried which might have aroused public opinion much more powerfully and have won the sympathy of the whole people for the struggle of the unemployed. This could not be secured by political demonstrations alone, which at times did not even pursue a concrete aim. We all remember what a great impression the hunger marches in Great Britain and the United States produced throughout the world. But how much greater would the impression on public opinion have been if *all* the hungry unemployed, together with their wives and children, had really come on to the streets with the simple demand for bread and relief.

- 5) Nor were the Communists able to popularize slogans the concrete nature of which might have mobilized the unemployed in the struggle against capital and linked up the masses in the factories with this struggle.

We are referring to such demands as the confiscation of stocks in favour of the unemployed, extra taxation of the capitalists, the taking over of factories that were standing idle or in which wholesale discharges were taking place, and so forth. It is true that in certain countries such demands were put forward by the Communists, but in most cases this was not done in good time, they were not popularized on a large enough scale, and worst of all, no serious fight on their behalf was undertaken.

What is also beyond doubt is that the fatalistic attitude of the Social-Democratic leaders that nothing could avail against the elemental force of the crisis exerted its influence on the whole proletariat. In the leadership of the unemployed movement there was far too much sheer agitation and far too little initiative in the organization of a real struggle. The Communists, who had been able, it is true, to organize thousands and tens of thousands of unemployed, had still not learned to draw millions into this movement.

That is why when the fascists in Germany began to organize charity soup kitchens for the unemployed, a part of the unemployed swallowed this bait, were duped by the propaganda of *Volksgemeinschaft* (the community of national interest), and turned away from the revolutionary struggle. The activity of the movement also subsided in other countries.

The Strike Movement

I now come to the *strike movement* in the period of the crisis. That the Communists were not able to mobilize the industrial workers for the strike struggle in the early years of the crisis (1930 to 1932), and that the workers remained deaf to the strike calls of the Communists, was due to the sabotage of every strike movement by the reformist trade union leaders and to the Social-Democratic ideology that held that no strikes could be conducted during the crisis. The influence of the Communists among the trade union workers in the factories was also very much diminished by the mass expulsion of Communists from the trade unions.

But finally, in 1932, the workers in a number of countries nevertheless began more and more frequently to undertake spontaneous fights. Faced with the growing strike sentiment of the masses, the trade union leaders felt themselves obliged to join in strike struggles and even to lead strikes.

In Poland, 50,399 workers went on strike against wage cuts, dismissals and the closing down of factories in 1930, and 106,985 in 1931. In 1932 the number rose to 313,934 and in 1933 to 458,399. In a number of instances the workers resorted to sit-down strikes, barricading themselves in the factories in order to prevent their being shut down and the workers dismissed. In many cases the extraordinary stubbornness of the Polish workers compelled the employers to abandon intended wage cuts and dismissals. The Communists played an outstanding part in organizing these fights. In this way it was proved to the

working class that even during the crisis it is possible to repulse the offensive of capital, and this served both to strengthen the fighting spirit of the workers and to heighten the prestige of the Communists as organizers of the struggle.

In Great Britain, the working class put up considerable resistance to the capitalist offensive from the very beginning of the crisis. In 1930, 307,000 workers went on strike, in 1931—490,000 and in 1932—379,000. Approximately one-quarter of the strikes ended favourably for the workers, and about 34 per cent ended in compromises. Here also it was proved that successful strikes could be conducted during the crisis.

But in other countries, where the crisis was particularly profound, as in Germany and the United States, the working class in the early years of the crisis was not in a position to put up any appreciable resistance to wage cuts by means of strikes. An upsurge of the strike movement in the United States began only in 1933, when the number of strikers totalled 774,763. In Germany, after a general lull in the strike movement, it was only in the autumn of 1932 that a big strike of the Berlin transport workers broke out, which acquired great political significance. But this strike too was stifled by the Social-Democrats.

What the Communists had warned the workers about from the very beginning of the crisis came to pass: the Social-Democratic policy and strategy resulted in crippling the fighting power of the proletariat, and consequently in an enormous increase of its misery. This was due to the fact that the workers did not heed the call of the Communists to resist wage cuts and dismissals and to fight for the maintenance and increase of unemployment relief, and thus made it possible for the capitalists to render the conditions of the working people still worse and to improve their own position at the latter's expense.

Despite this Social-Democratic policy of preventing big conflicts, groups of advanced toilers time and again resorted to the political struggle against capital and showed to millions and tens of millions of people the right road to follow.

I shall only recall the big unemployed demonstrations on March 6, 1930, in the United States, in which nearly a million unemployed took part, a number of big demonstrations in Germany in 1930 and 1931, the great unemployed demonstration in Budapest on September 1, 1930, the farmers' strikes in the United States in 1932, the great march of the veterans on Washington in 1932, the Spanish revolution on April 14, 1931, the strike in the British navy at Invergordon on

September 14, 1931, the mutiny in the Chilean navy in September 1931, the peasant rising in the Western Ukraine in 1932 and the mutiny on the Dutch warship *De Zeven Provinciën* in February 1933.

*Defects in the Organization of the Mass Struggle of the
Working People*

Why did these stormy political movements of the working people remain but a flash in the pan, producing no important results in the struggle for liberation? Why were they not transformed into a political mass struggle against the bourgeois state?

The causes lie in the following four main weaknesses:

1) These movements were largely spontaneous, undertaken without serious preparation, without a joint organization of all forces, without concrete fighting aims. They were only to a minor extent movements in response to the call of the Communist Party.

2) True, the Communist Party endeavoured to provide these movements with concrete slogans, to widen their scope and to raise them to a higher level of mass political consciousness; but the Social-Democratic Party and the reformist trade unions opposed this with all their might and main. The Communist Parties were still not strong and influential enough to organize the masses who had spontaneously undertaken the political struggle and to give them firm guidance.

3) Communist, Social-Democratic and unorganized workers participated in these movements. These masses, who had entered the struggle spontaneously, would have held together longer and could have been led further in the struggle only if a united front had been created between the Communist and Social-Democratic organizations. But the Social-Democratic Party was opposed to such a united front and rendered it impossible. It would, moreover, have been necessary to create permanent organs to lead the struggle, elected by the masses and consisting of Communists, Social-Democrats and unorganized workers, organs which would have enjoyed sufficient authority among the masses to draw increasingly large numbers into the struggle and at the same time to ensure revolutionary leadership of the whole movement. Such organs, however, were not created.

4) It is true that the idea of creating such permanent organs was conceived in the unemployed movement. But the city and district unemployed committees formed here and there by the Communists were neither organized on a sufficiently broad basis nor enjoyed sufficient authority among the masses to accomplish this great task. Nowhere did

they become in any way notable political centres, focal points for the sympathies of all the working people, nor did they become the affair of the whole class. The Communists did not even make any serious attempt to explain to the working people the meaning and significance of these organs. The consequence was that it became possible for the bourgeoisie and the Social-Democratic Parties to represent these organs as "irresponsible" and casual bodies, or as pure "manœuvres" of the Communist Party, and thus to weaken their influence among the non-Communist workers.

Under the conditions that prevailed in the crisis, the Communist Parties had to assume very big and difficult tasks in leading the masses; the Communists had to reckon with millions and to attempt to include all strata of the working people in the fighting front. The accomplishment of this task was all the more difficult since before the crisis the Communist Parties in most countries had been numerically weak organizations and exerted influence on relatively small sections of the workers.

The rapid change in the situation, the tremendous growth in the discontent of the masses and the increase of the fascist menace and the menace of war, required that the Communists should have constantly reviewed the situation and the role played by the various parties, groups and persons and have launched at the proper time the slogans corresponding to the changed situation. This complexity of the situation also demanded tremendous organizational work. In fulfilling these tasks the Communists gave many brilliant examples of good work. But in face of the rapid and politically complicated development of events, they often came out too late with their slogans, did not always correctly estimate the relation of class forces, and frequently persisted in slogans and fighting methods which somewhat earlier had been correct, but which had become antiquated with the change in the situation.

Always With the Masses and at the Head of the Masses

In a number of cases the Communists also overestimated the political maturity of the masses and believed that hard and strenuous work was no longer required to train the masses for the political struggle and to convince them of its necessity. They believed that it was sufficient to carry on propaganda in favour of Soviet government and to explain to the masses the program which the Communists would carry into effect when they had seized power, in order to persuade the work-

ers to accept their leadership. These false ideas led several Communist Parties to become transformed at times into mere propaganda organs for our program, instead of combining propaganda in favour of our program with the task of supplying the masses at the proper time with slogans that would mobilize them for the struggle at the given stage.

These erroneous ideas entertained by numerous Communists manifested themselves primarily in the trade union question and the development of the economic struggle. The Communists who had been expelled from the reformist trade unions adopted a hostile attitude towards the reformist trade unions, on the supposition that the more we denounced the reformist organizations for their passivity, their sabotage of strikes and their reformism, the more rapidly would the masses break with them spontaneously and go over to the small trade union skeleton organizations of the Communists.

The Communists failed to heed what Comrade Stalin had said on May 9, 1925, to the Moscow Party functionaries:

"If the Communist Parties wish to become a real mass force capable of advancing the revolution, they must link up with the trade unions and rely upon them for support."¹

Comrade Stalin pointed out that some Communists

"do not understand that, good or bad, the rank-and-file worker regards the trade unions as his strongholds which help him to maintain his wages, his working day, and so forth."²

And it was precisely in the time of the crisis, when utter misery fell to the lot of the labouring masses, that the rank-and-file worker felt very strongly that his trade union, however bad it might be, was nevertheless able to give him legal aid and certain material assistance, even if slight, that his trade union was a definite power—and he therefore did not want to break with it.

In a number of countries the Communists made the mistake of ignoring these sentiments of the masses, did no work in the trade unions, and failed to change their attitude towards the trade unions in good time and to pass from the united front only from below to a united front with the organizations. In Germany, certain Communists spoke, even in face of the fascist offensive, of the necessity of "destroying"

¹ J. Stalin, *The Results of the Work of the Fourteenth Conference of the Russian Communist Party*.

² *Ibid.*

the reformist trade unions, thereby contributing to isolate the Communists from the organized workers.

In America, the Communists for a long time declared that the American Federation of Labour was a purely capitalist strike-breaking organization, they saw only its leader, Green, and overlooked the workers.

On the other hand, a mistake just as grave as the underestimation of the fascist danger was the fact that fascism was discerned even where it did not exist. This mistake was due to the fact that a number of Communist writers gave a mechanical interpretation to the declaration of the Sixth Congress that the bourgeoisie was increasingly endeavouring to resort to fascist methods of rule.

In Germany, the Communists for a long time held the view that the Social-Democratic Hermann Mueller government was carrying out fascism, that the Bruening government was already a government of fascist dictatorship. On the other hand, they underrated the Hitler movement, by the assumption that in a country like Germany, where the working class was so highly organized, the Hitlerites could not possibly seize power, and that the petty-bourgeois masses who were spontaneously flocking to the Hitlerites would just as rapidly turn away from them.

In Austria, as early as 1929, the Schober government was declared to be a fascist government. In Czechoslovakia, the Masaryk-Benes group was branded by the Communists as a fascist group. There are many similar instances of erroneous estimates.

These erroneous ideas of the nature of fascism, and the failure to make a serious study of Italian and Polish fascism, resulted in the Communists being unable to launch slogans at the proper time calling for the defence of the remnants of bourgeois democracy against fascism, which was assuming the offensive, and to take advantage of the antagonisms within the ranks of the bourgeoisie.

In Germany, the Communists waited until the election of the Speaker of the Prussian Diet in 1932 before they declared that they would vote for the candidates of the Social-Democratic Party and the Centre in order to prevent the election of fascists.

Even in Poland, where after 1926 the Communists studied fascism more diligently than in many another country and issued slogans to the masses calling for a struggle against the liquidation of the remnants of bourgeois-democratic liberties, the Communists, when the Centre-Left bloc was created, were unable to take advantage of the differences between the government camp and the camp of the bourgeois-democratic opposition.

These mistakes were due to the absolutely false conception that all bourgeois parties are fascist, that there are "no two methods of bourgeois rule," and that it was unseemly for Communists to defend the remnants of bourgeois democracy. As long as we cannot replace bourgeois democracy by proletarian democracy, by the dictatorship of the proletariat, the proletariat is interested in retaining every scrap of bourgeois democracy in order to use it to prepare the masses for the overthrow of the power of capitalism and to achieve proletarian democracy.

Unless these sectarian views are eradicated, it is impossible to establish either a united front with the Social-Democratic workers or a broad People's Front with those labouring masses who are still far from the Communists, but who, nevertheless, can join us in the struggle against fascism and war, against the offensive of capitalism, for their partial demands and for the defence of the remnants of bourgeois democracy.

The Fight for the Allies of the Proletariat

In this period of our struggle the backwardness of our work of winning allies for the proletariat among the peasants and the urban lower middle classes was strongly felt. It is true that we overcame the fundamentally disdainful attitude and the craft arrogance of the old Social-Democratic Parties with respect to the lower middle class masses, an attitude which considered it beneath the dignity of the proletariat to bother about the lower middle class masses. Yet, if we exclude Poland and the Balkan countries, the Communists in most countries before the outbreak of the crisis had hardly passed beyond the stage of recognizing only in principle the necessity for work among the urban and rural petty-bourgeois masses.

In countries where the peasantry during the crisis, in consequence of the misery that had afflicted them, began to turn their backs on the bourgeoisie, the Communists missed the opportunity of furnishing the rising peasant movement with fighting slogans directed against the omnipotence of monopoly capital, which was ruining the peasantry, against low prices and the "thralldom of interest."

In Germany, where the discontent of the peasant masses had assumed vast proportions as a result of robbery prices, taxes and usurious interest, the Communist Party in 1931 published its program of aid to the peasants, in which it advocated the cancellation of debts, the abolition of indirect taxation, and the expropriation of large estates,

and demanded government aid for the toiling peasants. On the strength of this program a group of North German peasant leaders, who had formerly been connected with the fascist movement, in 1931 turned to the Communist Party. But the Communist Party, by reason of its lack of cadres of rural organizers and propagandists, was unable to take proper measures to explain this program in the rural districts and thus counteract the growing influence of the fascists who made wide play of their "anti-trust and anti-bank" demagoguery. The peasants turned to a party which they did not yet know by its deeds and which was not yet in power, but which promised the peasants to raise agricultural prices and to improve their conditions without overthrowing capitalism.

In France and in the United States, the discontent of the peasants and farmers resulted in a wide movement against the low prices of farm produce. The Communist Party took up the demands of the farmers only after great delay, having waited until the farmers' movement was on the ebb; it came out against the profits of the middlemen and the millers, thus creating conditions for a further increase of its influence among the farmers.

Nor were the Communists able to lead the movement of the urban middle classes against the monopoly trusts and banks, and to carry these sections of the population with them. When in Germany the Danat Bank crashed, with the result that large numbers of the petty bourgeoisie lost their deposits, the Communist Party issued no fighting slogans for these sections of the population and allowed a favourable opportunity for gaining greater influence among these sections to go by unutilized. In most of the other countries the lower middle classes did not receive adequate support from the Communists in their resistance to the trusts and to the banks which were draining their life blood. The consequence was that these strata held aloof from the struggle, ultimately followed the fascists and helped them to achieve their victory.

The weakness of the working class, caused by its divided condition and the betrayal of the interests of the workers by the Social-Democratic Party, enabled the German bourgeoisie to take advantage of the vacillations of the petty bourgeoisie and the peasantry in order to draw these strata temporarily into the camp of fascism. The German Communists did not promptly realize the extraordinary significance of the yoke of the Versailles Treaty, which imposed untold burdens on the labouring masses, and were not skilful enough to utilize in the interests of the class struggle the situation thereby created. They allowed the

German bourgeoisie to make the hatred felt for the yoke of Versailles serve for the maintenance of its own rule.

The Fascist Offensive Against the Working People of Germany

The defeat of the German proletariat and the establishment of the fascist dictatorship in Germany was the greatest event that marked these first years of the crisis in the capitalist countries. The oldest organizations of the working class formed under the banner of Marxism were smashed by a band of bestial robbers. One of the most progressive and culturally developed peoples fell under the sway of the most reactionary and most chauvinistic party of finance capital. A culturally highly developed country became a hotbed of European reaction, a gruesome torture chamber, and the instigator of a new war.

As early as 1930, the disintegration of the Weimar system became apparent. A frantic race to mobilize the masses set in, a race between the approaching revolution and the counter-revolution which was arming against it. It became clear that the German bourgeoisie was no longer able to rule by methods of parliamentarism and bourgeois democracy.

In the spring of 1932 it had already become evident that the fascists had a considerable advantage over the Communists in the matter of mobilizing the masses, and that, if the relation of class forces did not rapidly change in favour of the proletariat, the establishment of a most brutal and bloodthirsty dictatorship of the fascists in Germany was inevitable. The Communists endeavoured to bring about this change in the relation of forces in favour of the proletariat by doing all they could to intensify the fight for the united front. They set themselves the task of achieving an agreement with the Social-Democratic Party and the General Federation of German Trade Unions (the A.D.G.B.). The purpose of the united front would have been to repulse fascism and defend the remnants of the liberties of bourgeois democracy.

But the Social-Democratic Party definitely rejected every such proposal. Even when the fascists had already transferred the struggle to the streets, terrorizing the workers in all the cities of Germany and foully assassinating the most prominent representatives of the proletariat, the Social-Democrats continued to confine themselves exclusively to making lame protests in parliament. It was clear to everybody with any discernment that the struggle against the fascists could no longer be settled in parliament, but that the settlement of Germany's future and the fate of the German labour movement had already been shifted by the fascists to the streets.

Even when the Papen government chased out the Social-Democratic ministers in Prussia on July 20, and the Communist Party proposed the proclamation of a general strike to the Social-Democratic Party and the General Federation of German Trade Unions (A.D.G.B.), both these bodies called upon the workers to remain calm. The dismissed ministers appealed to the Reich Supreme Court, on the grounds that the constitution had been violated.

Even on January 30, 1933, when finance capital had already given the Hitler party governmental power to exercise the fascist dictatorship, the Social-Democratic Party and the A.D.G.B. again rejected the proposal of the Communist Party to call a general strike. They proclaimed the Communists provocateurs and called upon the workers not to offer resistance.

The Communists during this period did everything in their power to mobilize the labouring masses for a revolutionary struggle to prevent the fascist dictatorship. In this the Communists achieved considerable success. But they were not able to change the relation of forces obtaining at that time as long as the Social-Democrats did not abandon their hostile attitude to the united front and the struggle.

Now let the workers of Germany, let the world proletariat judge who bears the blame for the German defeat. Let them learn the bloody lesson of the German events: that this defeat was possible only because the majority of the working class still blindly followed the Social-Democratic Party, allowed the warnings of the Communists to pass unheeded, and rejected the struggle. There are "Left" also-revolutionaries who come forward and maintain that the Communists should have commenced the struggle, regardless of the fact that such a struggle of the minority of the proletariat would have ended in defeat. These heroes of the pseudo-revolutionary phrase refuse to understand that this would have involved an even greater defeat and the total annihilation of the revolutionary cadres of the German proletariat.

The German proletariat has suffered a defeat. The Communists did not and do not want the revolutionary cadres to perish out of pure heroism. That is not the finest kind of heroism. They want them to organize new struggles and new victories. (*Applause.*)

*The Bourgeoisie Has Failed to Weaken the Fighting Spirit
of the Masses*

The defeat of the proletariat in Germany, one of the most important strategic points of the international class struggle, resulted for a short

time in retarding the growth of the revolutionary mass movement and in temporarily halting the maturing of the elements of a revolutionary crisis in Poland as well. The defeat in Germany emboldened international reaction, increased the menace of war, intensified the pressure exercised by the bourgeoisie on the working class, and multiplied the efforts to establish a fascist regime in other countries too.

At the same time that the fascists were attacking the working people of Germany, the proletariat succeeded in achieving a number of major victories in other countries. The Chinese proletarians and peasants established their *Soviet Districts*. During the military campaigns undertaken by the Nanking government against the Red Army, the masses of the people displayed inspiring examples of heroism and devotion to the revolution. In view of the attack of the Japanese imperialists and of the refusal of the Nanking government to resist this attack, the Chinese Soviets raised the standard on behalf of saving the Chinese people from the Japanese yoke, the standard of the revolutionary fight of the people against Japanese imperialism, thus rendering the advance of the latter into the interior of China more difficult.

In Spain, in spite of the split in the working-class movement, we observe a mighty rise of the mass movement, a broad wave of mass strikes, an increasing number of political strikes, and the spread of the movement of the peasants, who take possession of the landed estates.

In all capitalist and colonial countries, we observe a steadily rising wave of strikes and peasant movements.

But of decisive importance for the whole world revolutionary front was the circumstance that precisely during the years in which the labouring masses of the whole world were plunged into unspeakable misery by capitalism, when fascism in Germany had smashed the labour organizations to bits, the Soviet Union completed the First Five-Year Plan, and the welfare of its working people improved from day to day. It was precisely during these years that socialism triumphed in the Soviet Union.

The historic victory of socialism in the Soviet Union is undermining the system of world imperialism, multiplying the forces of revolution, enhancing the importance of the Soviet Union as a factor for peace and as the basis of the world revolution, and strengthening the will of the toilers of the whole world to fight for socialism and for Soviet government.

Towards the end of this period of the struggle the bourgeoisie succeeded in improving its position at the expense of the workers, the peasants and the colonial peoples, in creating the conditions for a

transition from crisis to depression, and in inflicting a defeat on the German proletariat. On the other hand, the bourgeoisie did not succeed in weakening the front of world revolution; it did not succeed in smashing the Communist Party of Germany; it did not succeed in creating the conditions for a new economic boom.

The international relation of forces has changed not in favour of capitalism but in favour of socialism, not in favour of the bourgeoisie, but in favour of the proletariat.

I now come to the third section of the period under review, which covers the turn of the Socialist workers towards a united front with the Communists.

III. THE TURN OF THE SOCIALIST WORKERS TOWARDS A UNITED FRONT WITH THE COMMUNISTS

Under the influence of the final and irrevocable victory of socialism in the Soviet Union, on the one hand, and the horrors of fascism in Germany, on the other, the whole system of views, the whole world outlook of the masses of the working people, who only recently had still believed in the unshakable firmness of capitalism and bourgeois democracy, and in the possibility of a peaceful evolution to socialism, without revolutions and wars, began to collapse. The ideological basis upon which the program and tactics of the reformist parties had been based was caving in.

In this situation the Soviet Union is increasingly winning the minds and hearts of the working people, and is showing them the path of struggle. In this situation, the victory of socialism is inducing millions to change their views and opinions completely. In this situation a change is taking place in the sentiments of the vast numbers of workers, and especially in the sentiments of the Social-Democratic workers and the workers organized in the reformist trade unions.

The first expression of this change was, firstly, the united front of the world proletariat, spontaneously created on a wide scale for the defence of the prisoners of Leipzig, where the courageous defence of communism by Comrade Dimitrov was of great historical importance for the achievement of a united front. Secondly, the resort of the workers to active resistance against fascism in their own countries. The proletariat no longer yielded to fascism without a struggle, as was the case in Germany, but replied to the fascist attack with a *general strike* in France in February 1934 and an *armed struggle* in Austria in February 1934 and in Spain in October 1934.

The armed struggle in Austria and Spain revealed the tremendous fighting power of the working class, the boundless heroism and self-sacrifice, the revolutionary firmness and endurance of the fighting workers. The brave Schutzbundlers, the heroes of Floridsdorf, the defenders of the Karl Marx House and the Goethe House in Vienna, Koloman Wallisch, engineer Weissel and Muenichreiter will forever be remembered in the history of the proletarian struggle for emancipation.

The heroic miners of Asturias, the defenders of Oviedo—Communists, Socialists, Anarchists and non-partisans—have covered themselves with immortal glory. We send our greetings to the thousands of Spanish revolutionaries who are pining in the dungeons of Lerroux and Gil Robles.

The Bankruptcy of Social-Democratic Policy

But why, unlike the armed insurrection of October 1917 in Russia, did the armed struggle of the proletariat in February 1934 in Austria and in October 1934 in Spain not result in the victory of the proletariat?

In Spain, the monarchy was overthrown in April 1931, as it was overthrown in Russia in February 1917. The Spanish bourgeois-democratic revolution began. The Spanish Socialists joined the Azaña government.

Instead of insisting on disarming the reactionary fascist Civil Guard, the Spanish Socialists voted for the appropriations for its further extension, and after his release from prison appointed the monarchist General San Jurjo, who had taken up arms against the republic, commander of this Civil Guard, which was charged with the duty of protecting the republic. Instead of demanding the elimination of reactionary officers and the democratization of the army, they gave the reactionaries in the army an absolutely free hand. Instead of disarming the enemies of the people, the fascists, and arresting them, they persecuted the Communists and passed a law for the defence of the republic, a law under which the participants in the October fighting—Socialists and Communists—are now being tried in the courts.

The Socialists left the land, property and rights of the reactionary church and monasteries intact, and did not give land to the peasants, who should have been won for the revolution. They did not introduce workers' control over production; they did not improve the condition of the workers, nor did they arm them for the defence of the revolu-

tion. Instead of forcing the reactionary bourgeoisie into an impasse, they permitted it to organize and arm.

Is that how the Bolsheviks acted in 1917? Is that how they prepared for the victory of the proletariat in the revolution? Did not the Spanish Socialists act like Kerensky, whose government was overthrown by the Bolsheviks?

Even in February 1917, under the pressure of the Bolsheviks, the tsarist gendarmerie was abolished, soldiers' committees introduced, the soldiers granted civil rights, and the tsar and his highest officials arrested. Under the slogans "Peace," "Bread," and "Freedom," the Bolsheviks marched towards insurrection, fought for these demands in every stage of the revolution, mobilizing the masses of the people in support of these demands.

On the very first day of the insurrection they decreed the transfer of the whole land to the peasantry.

Immediately after their victory, they led the fight for the conclusion of a treaty of peace; they granted freedom to the subject peoples; they introduced workers' control in the factories; they proceeded to confiscate the property of counter-revolutionaries and completely eliminated the landlord class and the bourgeois machinery for suppressing the working people.

Long before the revolution itself, the activities of the Bolsheviks were directed towards mobilizing the proletariat and its allies for the victorious overthrow of bourgeois rule, for the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat, which put the most burning demands of the people into effect. That is why the majority of the working people supported the Bolsheviks and helped them to victory.

The activities of the Spanish Socialists inside and outside the Azaña government entirely aimed at reaching an understanding with the bourgeoisie, at preserving private property, at protecting the interests of the landlords, the church and the bourgeoisie against the revolutionary onslaught of the masses, and at leaving the old bourgeois state machinery intact. By so doing, they weakened the proletariat and strengthened the fascists.

In Austria, there was no revolutionary situation, as there was in Spain, until the beginning of the armed struggle. But the Austrian proletariat had the advantage that the overwhelming majority of the workers were organized in one party and in trade unions following the leadership of this party, and that the numerical weight of the proletariat was extremely great in this little country.

But the Social-Democratic Party, which had the following of ninety

per cent of the Austrian proletariat, was not a revolutionary party that had methodically and systematically made preparations for the struggle for the victory of the proletariat. As early as the revolution of 1918-20 this party had aided the bourgeoisie to gain the upper hand, resting content with the fact that the working class retained formal democratic rights and a few social gains.

When the fascists began their struggle against bourgeois democracy, the Social-Democratic leaders yielded ground step by step, surrendering one achievement of the revolution of 1918 after another. They agreed to the extension of the president's prerogatives and to the impairment of the constitution. They permitted the suppression of their press and the partial disarming of the Schutzbund.

The fighting strength of the bourgeoisie grew, while the fighting strength of the proletariat diminished. The belief of the toiling masses in the possibility of an improvement of their conditions under Social-Democratic leadership began to vanish.

It is ridiculous on the part of Otto Bauer now, after the Austrian Social-Democratic Party has by its conduct disorganized the working people and failed to prepare for the struggle, to try to prove that he followed the example of the Bolsheviks, only adapting the tactics of the "Asiatic" Bolsheviks to "European" conditions.

Armed insurrection must be prepared in such a way as to be the affair of the entire working class. The majority of the proletariat must be won over to it; furthermore, the support of the majority of the working people is indispensable. The Spanish and Austrian Socialists, however, reduced insurrection to an affair of the fighting formations alone.

If the armed insurrection is to be successful, the most favourable moment for the proletariat must be chosen. The Spanish and Austrian Socialists, however, let the initiative slip from their hands long before, allowing the fascists to appoint the day of battle.

For armed insurrection to be successful, the masses must clearly know the fighting aims of the insurrection. The Spanish and the Austrian Social-Democratic leaders, however, did not formulate such fighting aims.

We acknowledge the great fact that both in Spain and in Austria some of the Social-Democratic leaders, even if under the pressure of the masses, decided in favour of the armed struggle against the bourgeoisie. In this the Communists supported them self-sacrificingly.

In Spain, the Communists joined the Workers' Alliance, although they enjoyed no serious influence in it. In Spain, as in Austria, the

Communists fought in the front ranks, for the place of Communists is always where the fighting is in progress. But it is precisely the experience of these armed struggles under Social-Democratic leadership that shows that under such leadership the proletariat cannot succeed.

Successes of the United Front and the Anti-Fascist People's Front

The struggle in France, which assumed big dimensions in February 1934, in its external aspect remained on a lower level than the struggles in Spain and Austria; but owing to the fact that the fight of the French proletariat was directed against fascism in good time, it exerted a greater influence on the development of the proletarian struggle in all countries.

What is the distinctive feature of the struggle in France?

When the fascist bands for the first time marched *en masse* through the streets of Paris, the French proletariat did not let itself be lulled by the theory of the lesser evil and by talk of formal democracy, as was the case in Germany, but at the first fascist sally flocked into the streets without distinction of party to oppose fascism in the tremendous political demonstration of February 9 and the political general strike of February 12, 1934. In this way the French proletariat repulsed the first big attack of the fascists. (*Applause.*)

By this action the proletariat compelled the French Socialist Party, although after great vacillations, to consent to the establishment of a united front with the Communist Party. In this way it laid the foundation for united anti-fascist actions of the whole organized labour movement, which are exerting a tremendous influence on the unorganized majority of the working class and the petty-bourgeois masses in town and country.

Our Communist Party of France, considerably grown and full of big initiative, has, however, not remained content with the establishment of a united front with the Socialists, but has drawn up a program of demands that cut the bourgeoisie to the heart, such as the demand for the merciless taxation of wealth; or demands that disorganize the fascists, such as the demand for the prohibition of the fascist organizations and their press, the arrest of the fascist leaders and the confiscation of the funds of fascist organizations; or demands that aim at lessening the danger of war, such as the demand for a peace treaty with the Soviet Union, and for a real fight against the war-mongers. These are all demands designed to ameliorate the condition of the labouring masses and to consolidate their positions.

By its actions the Communist Party of France has laid the foundation for a wide People's Front in the fight against fascism and war, which is attracting increasing numbers of the peasantry, the urban petty bourgeoisie and the intellectuals, drawing followers of the Radical Socialist Party into the movement, and making the revolutionary proletariat more and more the hegemon, the leader in the struggle of all the working people.

The tremendous anti-fascist demonstration on July 14, 1935, the French national holiday, in which the Communists, Socialists, and Radical Socialists marched together, and in which more than half a million working people took part in Paris alone, was not only the greatest of all demonstrations that have hitherto taken place in capitalist countries, but also an expression of the tremendous influence exerted by the united front on the fighting spirit of the workers, through them attracting the other sections of the population to the People's Front. (*Prolonged applause.*)

This was also borne out by the important successes gained by the Communist Party of France in the municipal elections held this year. These successes were the result of the struggle of the Communist Party for establishing a united front of the working class and the anti-fascist People's Front for the defence of democratic rights. They were the result of the activity and initiative displayed by the Communists in connection with the cabinet crises and the fight on behalf of the pact of mutual assistance between France and the Soviet Union in the event of military attack.

This success of the French Communist Party strengthens the French proletariat and renders it more difficult for the bourgeoisie to resort to fascist methods of rule.

The situation in France has grown very acute. The fate of the Third Republic and of democracy, the fate of the labouring masses, now depends on the further development of the united front and the People's Front, on the activity of the masses.

The struggle of the French proletariat is one of great international significance. The success of the French proletariat, which repulsed the first mass attack of the fascists in February 1934 thanks to the united front of the Communists and Socialists, and which effected its great march against fascism on July 14, 1935, has shown the working people of all countries that only a united fight of the working people based on revolutionary tactics can repel the offensive of capital and fascism and foil the war-mongers.

United front agreements have been reached between the Communists and the Socialists in Austria, Spain and Italy, while united front mass actions of the workers have been taking place in England, the United States, Poland, Czechoslovakia, and many other countries where the Socialist Party leaders, like the Executive Committee of the Second International, continue to reject all agreement with the Communists.

In Great Britain, the small Communist Party has established a united front with numerous trade unions and lower organizations of the Labour Party. On September 9, 1934, it was able to bring 150,000 workers out into the streets, and in January and February 1935, by means of a wave of demonstrations, meetings, and strikes, it was able to force the government to abandon the second part of the Unemployment Act, an act that provided for the organization of labour camps and the transfer of unemployed relief affairs to an extra-parliamentary commission. The establishment of a united front with local trade union organizations, and the persistent work carried on by the Communists within them, has already resulted in the trade unions in Great Britain taking a stand in a number of cases against the General Trade Union Council and rejecting the latter's Black Circular, which calls for the expulsion of Communists from the trade unions.

In the United States of America the revolutionary workers were able, as a result of united front tactics, to consolidate and extend their influence in a number of A.F.L. organizations. They were able in a large measure to win the support of the trade unions for the bill for unemployment insurance introduced by the Communists, and thus to make this demand the affair of all the working people. The revolutionary workers were in this way able to gain decisive influence in the big strikes of 1934, the seamen's strike on the Pacific Coast and the general strike in San Francisco, whereby a number of material advantages were gained for the workers and the general political position and the class consciousness of the American proletariat strengthened. As a result, the character of the American labour movement has undergone a decisive change and the working class has been led on to the road of an independent policy.

In Poland, although the leaders of the Social-Democratic Party (P.P.S.) rejected every proposal for an agreement with the Communists, the change in the temper of the masses has led to the Communists establishing a united front with various organizations of Socialists and to strengthening the anti-fascist movement among the labouring masses.

The united front movement of the working people is making headway in all capitalist countries, no matter what the attitude of the

Social-Democratic leaders may be towards the practice of agreements with the Communists, and no matter how these leaders may fear the revolutionizing effect of a united front with the Communists upon the masses they lead. It would take up very much time were I to enumerate in my report all the successes of this united front movement.

This movement manifests itself in the most varied forms, from the agreements between the parties and the non-party Amsterdam-Pleyel movement against fascism and war, at the head of which stands our friend Henri Barbusse, to the amalgamation of trade union, youth, sports, cultural and other organizations. The reformist leaders, try as they may, are no longer able to check the tremendous influence exercised by the slogan for the fighting unity of all proletarians against fascism and war. Still less are they succeeding in checking the growing influence exerted on the labouring masses of the whole world by the victory of socialism in the Soviet Union.

Let the Social-Democrats hold posts in the governments of Czechoslovakia, Belgium, Denmark, Sweden and Norway, let the Labour Party leaders take over the government in England—the Communists will support them against the fascists—the working masses in these countries have begun to understand that their strength lies not in cabinet posts but in the united front fight.

But the Social-Democratic ministers in Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Sweden and Norway are not conducting a real fight against fascism.

The Czech people are alarmed as to the fate of their national independence. This alarm is shared by the Communists. But what do the Social-Democratic ministers do? Instead of cutting the ground from under the Hitler agents in Czechoslovakia by a policy designed in the national and economic interests of the labouring masses, they nurse Henlein's fascist movement and enable him to draw the majority of the Germans in Czechoslovakia into his party. Instead of mobilizing all the forces of the people against fascism, they persecute the Communists. Instead of throwing the fascists into jails and concentration camps, they do that to the Communists and anti-fascists. Instead of carrying on a struggle against the war-mongers, the Danish and Swedish Social-Democratic governments are by their policy objectively supporting the German fascists. This anti-proletarian policy of the Social-Democratic Parties in Czechoslovakia and the Scandinavian countries is making the working-class masses realize that the Social-Democratic ministers are not a bulwark against fascism, war preparations and the capitalist offensive.

The realization of this is inducing the working class to strive for a united front with the Communists—as is particularly shown in the case of Czechoslovakia—in order to settle accounts with fascism and the war-mongers in a proletarian fashion, to avoid a situation such as the German proletariat now has to suffer, and to prevent the occurrence of a new world shambles.

The working class in the fascist countries have realized the great strength and value of the united front. In spite of a number of sectarian notions that recently prevailed among the leaders of the Communist Party of Germany, and in spite of the resistance of the Social-Democratic leaders, the masses of German workers are more and more clearly realizing that an effective struggle against fascism can be carried on, and the latter's overthrow achieved, only by means of a united front of the Communists and Social-Democrats.

In Hungary, the workers realize that they can defend their trade unions, and even the Social-Democratic organizations, only by a united front with those very Communists who only very recently were betrayed to the police by the Social-Democratic leaders.

The Way to Overcome the Split in the Ranks of the Working Class

The movement for a united front of Communists and Socialists has profound roots. It arises from the deep impression made on the wide masses of workers by the victory of socialism in the Soviet Union, under the influence of which the idea of storming the citadel of capitalism is maturing in the minds of the masses. It arises from the experience of the whole international labour movement in the capitalist countries, from the experience of the German defeat, from the experience of the armed struggles in Austria and Spain and from the experience of the general strike and the united front in France. From this the working class is drawing the conclusion that the struggle against capitalism can be carried on only by a united front and in close contact with the Soviet Union.

This conclusion of the masses, drawn from their own experience in the struggle, has produced the greatest change in the international labour movement since the October Revolution.

Comrades, the movement for the united front is much more than the arithmetical sum of the forces of two workers' parties. The majority of the working class in the capitalist countries is unorganized and in many countries still follows the bourgeois parties. The united front of

the labour movement represents such an increase of strength as to make it a powerful force of attraction for the mass of proletarians who are still not class conscious, detaching them from the bourgeois parties and enrolling them in the class struggle.

In Poland, where the Socialist Party is legal, while the Communists are subjected to the most brutal persecution, where the Socialist and non-party workers when they undertake joint action with the Communists expose themselves to the same persecution, the united front bears witness to the tremendous revolutionizing of the working-class masses and to their readiness to make sacrifices for the revolutionary struggle.

If the three million members of the British Labour Party tend towards a united front with the Communist Party, this implies that we have here something much more than the arithmetical sum of the forces of the two parties, it implies rather that the masses are turning from reformism to a revolutionary policy.

The united front is the first step towards overcoming the split in the working-class movement, towards the creation of a strong united revolutionary party of the proletariat.

In Austria, the Communists have raised the question of amalgamation with the Party of Revolutionary Socialists. This union has not yet materialized, because the Socialists do not want it.

In France, the Communists entered into negotiations with the Socialist Party for a united revolutionary party.

We can only welcome the voices raised by some Socialists in the Baltic countries, who consider closer political relations with the Soviet labour movement necessary.

This movement for a united revolutionary party will undoubtedly continue to develop, for the victory of socialism in the Soviet Union has shaken the foundations of reformism, and all the toilers of the world will rally around the policy of the Soviet Union.

This is confirmed not only by developments in the imperialist countries, but also by developments in the colonies and dependent countries.

The Triumphant Progress of the Chinese Soviets

The outstanding event, an event that has impressed its stamp on the entire colonial world in the post-war period, is the Chinese revolution, which since the Sixth World Congress of the Communist International has taken on a Soviet form. The heroic struggle of the Chinese Red Army, which has covered itself with undying fame, stands as a

shining example for the toilers of the whole colonial world. Six times have the militarists of the Kuomintang, with the full support of the international imperialists, equipped expeditions to crush the Soviet movement. All the six campaigns of the generals against the Soviet districts ended with the defeat of the Kuomintang militarists. (*Applause.*)

The lessons of the military struggles of the Chinese Red Army furnish striking proof of the fact that a people oppressed by imperialism can successfully take up the struggle in a revolutionary war, which in its course satisfies the fundamental needs of the working people, against a superior enemy and international imperialism armed to the teeth.

The Chinese revolution provides the first model of a colonial revolution in which the ideological, and also, in its initial form, the state hegemony of the proletariat is realized. In the Chinese working class the colonial proletariat has proved in practice its ability to solve great historical problems, to maintain the complete economic and political independence of the country, to completely abolish feudal survivals, to put an end to large landed proprietorship, to cut out the cancer of usury, and to undertake revolutionary changes that clear the way for the victory of socialism.

I now come to the part of my report dealing with the state of affairs in our Sections.

IV. THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL AND ITS SECTIONS

Today, more than ever before, the development of historical events depends on the degree of class consciousness and the state of organization of the working class, on the skilful and clever tactics of the Communists, on the might and strength of the Communist International.

In his report to the Seventeenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, held in January-February 1934, Comrade Stalin said:

"Some comrades think that as soon as a revolutionary crisis occurs the bourgeoisie must drop into a hopeless position, that its end is predetermined, that the victory of the revolution is assured, and that all they have to do is to wait for the bourgeoisie to fall, and to draw up victorious resolutions. This is a profound mistake. The victory of revolution never comes by itself. It has to be prepared for and won. And only a strong proletarian revolutionary party can prepare for and win victory. Moments occur when the situation is revolutionary, when the rule of the bourgeoisie is shaken to its

very foundations, and yet the victory of the revolution does not come, because there is no revolutionary party of the proletariat sufficiently strong and authoritative to lead the masses and take power. It would be unwise to believe that such 'cases' cannot occur."

Comrades, we must confess that such "cases" frequently occur, that such "cases" may be repeated if we do not take Comrade Stalin's warning to heart and do not do everything necessary to strengthen the Communist Parties and to see to it that they are able to win over the majority of the proletariat.

The chief lesson to be learned from the history of the revolutionary movement is that we Communists must work unceasingly in organizing the masses, strengthening the Communist Parties and their ties with the masses, and strengthening the Communist International.

If we do not prepare ourselves for the accomplishment of this task it may come about—however profound the revolutionary crisis may be—that the bourgeoisie will succeed in fooling the masses, in again suppressing the liberation movement of the proletariat for a certain period, in establishing fascist dictatorship in a number of other countries and in seeking for a way out of its difficult position in a new imperialist war for a new repartition of the world.

The period that elapsed between the Sixth and the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International was, as I have already said, a period in which the working-class masses swung over to the revolutionary struggle, a period in which the influence of the Communist Parties among the masses rapidly grew, and at the same time a period in which the Communist Parties became organizationally and politically consolidated.

The political and organizational consolidation of the Communist Parties was effected in the course of a struggle against the Right elements, which were urging the Parties to capitulate to Social-Democracy. Soon after the Sixth World Congress the Rights began to oppose the line of the Congress: in Germany Brandler, somewhat later in the U.S.A. Lovestone, in Czechoslovakia Jilek, in Sweden Kilbom, and in France Sellier and later Doriot.

Nevertheless, neither in Germany nor in the U.S.A., neither in Czechoslovakia nor in France, did the Right opportunists succeed in gaining the following of any appreciable sections of the Party membership. Only in Sweden did the Kilbom group succeed, owing to the inadequate explanatory work carried on by the followers of the Comintern and to their mistakes, in splitting the Swedish Communist Party

and in winning a section of the revolutionary workers away from the Communist International.

In the fight against the Rights, and simultaneously in the fight against the "Left" sectarian views which tended to isolate the Party from the masses, the Communist Parties became sufficiently steeled to counteract opportunist influences; they tested their ranks, ejected the rotten elements who were unfit for the fight, and at the same time acquired the ability of better manœuvring in the fight against the bourgeoisie and reformism, adapting their tactics to the concrete conditions of the class struggle of the proletariat in each particular country.

The Heroic Warriors of Communism

By the internal consolidation of the Parties, resulting from the experience accumulated in the new stage of struggle and from the serious work performed in training cadres, the Communist Parties rose to a new and higher level. This is borne out by the heroic struggle of the Chinese Red Army, which is headed by peasants, agricultural workers and students who during these seven years have been trained by the Party and have developed into capable organizers and leaders of the masses, into proletarian statesmen.

This is borne out by the work of the Communist Party of Germany, the work of the lower ranks of Party cadres, who, in spite of the frequent disorganization of the central leadership by the Gestapo (the secret police) and the frightful mediæval terror, have been able to orient themselves independently in complex political questions and to organize the struggle of the workers against the National-Socialists. This is borne out by the skilful tactics of the Communist Party of France, which have led to the establishment of a united front and to the amalgamation of the masses of the people in the fight against the fascist offensive. This is borne out by the October fighting in Spain, where only five years ago there was still but an insignificant group of Communist propagandists, but where in the past few years a strong Communist Party was created which led the armed fighting in a large part of Asturias.

The past seven years have shown the world that wherever the labouring masses took up the fight against the imperialist yoke, against the plundering of the working people by high finance, the banks and the trusts, the fight in the interests of the freedom of the peoples and the culture of humanity, the Communists have fought in the front ranks.

During the past seven years the world was able to convince itself

of the steadfastness and self-sacrifice, the boundless devotion of the cadres of the Communist International to the cause of the struggle for emancipation of all who are exploited and oppressed.

Remember the stand taken by Comrade Dimitrov at the Leipzig trial, remember the trials of Rakosi in Hungary, Antikainen in Finland and Fiete Schulze in Germany, remember the heroic deaths of Comrades Tsu Tsu-po (Strakhov), Luettgens, and Kofardzhiev, and remember, finally, the numerous heroes and victims of the great struggle for emancipation in all the countries of the world.

Extremely significant is the circumstance that in the period under review individual Parties, or several Parties in conjunction, frequently took the initiative of international action in the struggle on behalf of the unemployed and against fascism and war. Extremely significant also is the fact that the stronger and more experienced Parties assisted the weaker Parties with advice and the fact that the Communists of imperialist countries constantly helped the Communists of the colonial countries in their work and assisted the weaker Parties both in the matter of their internal consolidation and in their fight against the bourgeoisie.

In connection with the fact that during the past few years a change has taken place in the consciousness of the broad working-class masses, particularly of the Social-Democratic workers, the Communist Parties now possess incomparably greater opportunities of winning over the working-class masses. Our slogans are gaining popularity among increasingly broader strata of the working class and also within the Social-Democratic Parties.

Faced by the rapid abandonment of reformism by the masses, faced by the danger of proletarian revolution, the bourgeoisie is abolishing the last remnants of bourgeois-democratic liberties and the organizations of the proletariat, including the Social-Democratic Parties and the trade unions.

As a result of this offensive of the bourgeoisie against the working-class organizations, only 22 of the 67 Sections of the Communist International in the capitalist countries, and only 11 in Europe, are able to work legally or semi-legally. Forty-five Sections, 15 of them in Europe, are obliged to work under conditions of strict illegality and under a gruesome terror. Among them are countries like Italy, Germany, Austria and Latvia, where the fascists have smashed all the organizations of the proletariat, including the Social-Democratic Parties and the trade unions, and are forcibly driving the workers into the fascist organizations.

*We Must Explain the Program, Strategy and Tactics of the Comintern
to the Masses*

The forms and methods of the struggle of the Communists for the working-class masses, their *agitation*, *propaganda* and organizational work are determined by the position of the Communist Party in each given country. Nevertheless, in all capitalist countries without exception, this struggle is carried on under the common slogans of a fight against the capitalist offensive, against fascism and against the preparations for a new imperialist war, with the main objective of fighting for Soviet power.

The methods of agitation and propaganda adopted by the fascists and many other bourgeois parties and their leaders go to show that the bourgeoisie is feeling its weakness and that it is no longer able to maintain its rule by openly coming out for capitalism before the masses.

Many of our agitators and editors believe that it is our duty to give only a theoretical proof that the slogans of the bourgeoisie are unscientific and not in harmony with Marxist-Leninist political economy. That is quite useless.

It is our duty to prove to the masses that German "National-Socialism" does not contain a single grain of socialism. The fascist demagogues are endeavouring to deck themselves in the toga of people's tribunes who are protecting the "interests" of the whole nation.

It is therefore our duty to expose them as agents of the powerful trusts and the cannon kings, to show the masses what lies behind the legend of national unity and how a handful of capitalists and fascist leaders are battenning on the people. We must show the masses that only the dictatorship of the proletariat—which is the only real democracy for the working people created on the model of the Soviet Union—is able to help the working people.

The capitalist system is becoming more and more repulsive to the working people. All the outstanding minds of our generation are turning against the capitalist system. In the eyes of the masses communism is coming to be their only saviour.

The labouring masses are opposed to capitalism; they have lost their faith in reformism and are beginning to break away from it. The labouring masses are in favour of a united fighting front against capital, fascism and war.

The Communists, who are organizing a consistent fight against the

capitalist offensive, fascism and war, are in favour of the united front as a form of unity which can be realized immediately.

But unity of action is not enough. The change that has taken place among the masses in connection with the change in the world situation caused by the victory of socialism in the Soviet Union and the fact that in more and more countries the bourgeoisie are adopting the methods of fascist dictatorship, has resulted in the Social-Democratic masses beginning to turn towards the united front spontaneously. But this does not mean that these masses will come over to communism just as spontaneously.

The workers are in favour of a united party, but they often picture the creation of such a party in too simplified a form. If all the revolutionary workers are to be united in one party, the masses themselves must widely discuss the program and tactical questions and the aims of the struggle.

Contact with the Masses—a Law of Bolshevism

I now come to the condition of our Sections from the point of view of organization. Our Sections in all countries have grown politically and numerically. But their organizational growth does not correspond to the growth of our influence, and the result of this may be that the Communist Parties may not be equal to the tremendous tasks which the political situation imposes on them in the matter of leading the masses.

The organizational growth of the Sections of the Communist International in countries where the movement is legal is at present being primarily hindered by a number of shortcomings in recruiting new members, in the work of educating them and in building up the Party organizations. This is especially borne out by the so-called "fluctuation," as expressed in the fact that newly-won Party members either never actually join the ranks of the Party or leave it after a few months. Many of the workers newly recruited by the Party have still inadequate political training and are not sufficiently active and disciplined. The Party organization must devote a great deal of attention to them and train them to become militant Communists and active Party functionaries. But this is just what the old members often fail to do.

The organizational growth of the Sections of the Communist International in countries where the movement is illegal is hampered by police persecution, and by the fear that provocateurs may penetrate into the organization. Yet in the illegal Sections the new members are

as a rule better trained, better disciplined and more active. But here too big defects are to be observed.

In many organizations both in the legal and illegal Sections, a veritable sectarian fear* of an influx of former Social-Democratic workers prevails. In many of the organizations in Germany this sectarian spirit reached such lengths that either special conditions of admission were drawn up for former Social-Democrats, or they were organized in special cells; frequently excessive political demands were also made on them. Such an attitude towards former Social-Democrats bears witness to a complete lack of understanding of the change of spirit that is taking place among the Social-Democratic masses.

This change of spirit is borne out in the case of our Austrian Party, over two-thirds of the membership of which today consists of comrades who only a year ago belonged to the Social-Democratic Party, and who are now faithful, devoted and active members of the Communist Party of Austria. And this is true not only of former rank-and-file members of the Social-Democratic Party, but also of former Social-Democratic functionaries. It is with particular pleasure that I here stress the fact that the delegation of our Austrian Section to this congress to a considerable extent consists of comrades who in February 1934 were still prominent functionaries of the Social-Democratic Party. (*Applause.*) The composition of the Austrian delegation is one of the best evidences of the decline of reformism and the success of our slogans.

The basic principle of our Party organization is that it must know how to maintain closest contact with the masses and avail itself of every opportunity for organizing the struggle and for enlisting the workers in the struggle. In this it must base itself on the decisive strata of the workers of the most important factories and branches of industry.

I should like here to stress two particularly important groups of tasks in the organizational work of our Parties, tasks that as a matter of fact have been most neglected. They are *work among women and work among the youth*. In this present situation particularly there exist in all countries the most favourable conditions for winning the women and youth for the revolutionary struggle.

The decisive condition for successful mass work of the Communists and for the winning of the masses by the Communist Parties is communist work in the trade unions and in other organizations embracing the working-class masses. Unless influence over the members of these organizations is secured, there can be no question of winning the majority of the working class for the Communist Parties.

There has been a certain increased animation lately in our work in the Amsterdam trade unions in Great Britain, Hungary and Poland, and in the American Federation of Labour. This has already resulted in rendering the reformists in both Great Britain and the United States unable to give effect to the instructions of the so called Black Circular for the expulsion of Communists. In Hungary and Poland our work made it difficult for the fascists to abolish the trade union organizations.

Great initiative has also been shown of late by the Communists in Austria and Germany, who are taking an active part in the *restoration of the Free Trade Unions*. But many Communists still regard the Amsterdam trade unions as the domain of the Social-Democratic Parties and not as their own organizations, not as part of the fundamental organizations of the working class, for the strengthening of which we must work in a practical way.

In those countries where the working-class organizations have been smashed by the fascists, the Communists will not be able to extend their influence to the broad working-class masses unless they utilize every legal and semi-legal opportunity, unless they work in the fascist trade unions in Italy and Austria and in the ranks of the so-called Labour Front in Germany, and unless they fight in these organizations to win influence over the masses and to lead the masses.

Our slogan in the fight to win the majority of the proletariat for the Communist Party is: *Extend the front, penetrate deeper into all mass organizations.*

The aim of our work within the Party is *to strengthen the Party and to raise the political level of the Party organizations!*

The More Important Sections of the Communist International

I will now proceed to deal with the position of some of our more important Sections.

During the past seven years the Communist Parties have learned to lead millions of people and have gained tremendous fighting experience. In all countries the importance of the Communist Parties has enormously increased. Our Sections have grown in strength.

The *Communist Party of Germany*, our largest Communist Party in the capitalist world, which after the defeat of the German proletariat in January 1933 did not cease its fight against the bourgeoisie for a single day, has been driven underground. In spite of the terror, and overcoming the sectarian views of certain of its leaders, the Party is

mobilizing the proletarian masses against fascism and against preparations for a new war, and is fighting for the satisfaction of the day-to-day demands of the workers.

The *Communist Party of Austria*, which only a year and a half ago was a small propagandist group enjoying very little influence, after the bankruptcy of Social-Democracy became the only heir of the best traditions of the Austrian proletariat, and its leading party. (*Applause.*) It is successfully combating the survivals of reformism, and is fighting for a united front and for the amalgamation of all the revolutionary workers in a united Communist Party.

The *Communist Party of Spain*, which at the time of the Sixth World Congress was a sectarian group, consisting principally of émigrés living abroad, has become a compact and mass party, steeled in the fight, and a powerful political factor in the development of the Spanish revolution. (*Applause.*) Its slogans are being taken up by ever larger masses. In October 1934 it already played a great political role in the armed fighting.

Summarizing what has been said regarding these three Parties, it is with great pride that we are able to record the incredible endurance and steadfastness displayed by the German Communists in face of a bestial terrorism and the exceptionally important fact that the Communists of Spain and Austria not only fought in the front ranks at the barricades, but also after the defeat, without losing a single moment, revealed to the working-class masses the weak points in the proletarian front, began to combat reformism, and organized a united front of all the proletarians in order to create a firm foundation for future victories.

Our glorious *Communist Party of China* has during the past seven years stood in the vanguard of the fight of the peoples of the colonies and dependent countries. It has a membership of over 300,000.

Another tremendously important event in the development of the revolutionary movement in the colonies is the creation of the *Communist Party of India*. (*Applause.*)

The *Communist Party of France* has the greatest successes to record as compared with the Communist Parties of other imperialist countries. It has trebled its membership, and by the successful application of united front tactics has become a very important political factor in France. (*Applause.*)

The *Communist Party of Great Britain*, a small organization compared with the Labour Party, has increased its membership by one-third and, by carrying on successful work among the masses and by

correctly applying united front tactics, has strengthened its position both in the trade union movement and among the whole working class. It supports and fights for the democratic demands of the masses. It supports their desire for a Labour government and at the same time advocates the program of proletarian revolution as the only way of escape from poverty and want. Nevertheless, the Communist Party of Great Britain has remained a small organization.

The *Communist Party of the U.S.A.*, having overcome the factional struggle, has considerably grown numerically and, as the economic crisis grew in intensity, has begun to extend its influence widely among the working-class masses, the farmers and the intellectuals. But in order still further to strengthen its influence among the working-class masses, the Party itself must grow and must consolidate its positions in the trade union movement. It must fight more vigorously than hitherto for the creation of a broad mass party of workers and farmers, as a coalition of all organizations of the working people against the bourgeoisie.

The *Communist Party of Japan*, which is carrying on its work amidst an extraordinarily severe terror, has organized the fight against the offensive of Japanese imperialism in a Bolshevik fashion and has given substantial support to the toiling masses of China. But government terror and the activities of provocateurs have seriously weakened the Party. In order to be able to achieve further success, the Japanese Communists must resolutely eradicate the remnants of sectarianism and make real use of all legal opportunities of fighting for the day-to-day interests of the working class. This at the same time is the condition for the political and organizational strengthening of the Party for the purpose of leading the labouring masses in the fight against reaction.

The *Communist Party of Czechoslovakia* has during these years led big mass movements and has gained in political and organizational strength. Thanks to the good mass work it performed, it was able, in spite of the categorical rejection by the Social-Democratic leaders of all proposals for a united front, to establish a united front with many local Social-Democratic organizations. The results of the parliamentary elections of 1935, in which the Party secured 850,000 votes, bear witness to a considerable growth in the influence of the Party among the worker and peasant masses. The Party must widely develop the united front against the capitalist offensive, against Czech and German fascism and against war, which is threatening the political independence of the Czech people, and in favour of an alliance with the Sov-

iet Union. At the same time it must wage a struggle against national oppression in the German, Ukrainian and Slovak regions.

And finally, comrades, a few words regarding the greatest and leading Section of our International, the Party of Lenin and Stalin, the *Communist Party of the Soviet Union*. (Applause.)

Under the leadership of Comrade Stalin, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union has during this period gained new victories of world historical importance and is conducting a successful fight for the establishment of a classless socialist society. It provides us with a great example of how we must fight and win.

Comrades, only a few of the biggest Parties of our International have been mentioned in the report. To make even a brief report at this congress on every Section would be extremely difficult.

The Leninist Style of Leadership

In general, I should like to emphasize only one point. An increasing number of Communist Parties which at the time of the Sixth World Congress still represented purely propagandist groups are now being transformed into mass parties and are becoming serious political factors in their countries. In all the Communist Parties of the larger countries, leaderships faithful to our principles have evolved who are able, on the basis of the decisions of our congresses and plenums, to decide the most complex political and tactical questions of their countries independently.

This changes the functions of the Executive Committee of the Communist International and enables the E.C.C.I. to devote the greater part of its activities to working out the fundamental political and tactical positions of the international labour movement. In doing this it naturally must be guided by the concrete conditions and peculiarities of each particular country, must make it a rule to avoid interfering in the internal organizational questions of the individual Parties and must assist all the Parties to strengthen their truly Bolshevik leadership in the matter of agitation and propaganda and in utilizing the experiences of the world Communist movement internationally.

In view of the extraordinary seriousness and acuteness of the present situation, we also consider it urgently necessary that the leading representatives of all the more or less large Sections of the Communist International should take a more active and permanent part in the work of the Executive Committee, its Presidium and Secretariat.

This will result in further strengthening our international leadership and will raise it, and our entire work, to a higher level.

The style and methods of our work change in accordance with the changes in the political situation and with the growth and increasing strength of our Parties. While at the time of the Sixth Congress many of our Parties were torn by internal dissension and factional fights, we are now more united and more solid than ever before. (*Applause.*)

We must lend considerably greater scope to our work and now there must not be a single question, either of the home and foreign policy of the countries or of the mutual relations between Parties and groups, to which the Communists do not devote their attention and do not adopt a definite attitude in order to exert their influence on the whole course of historical development.

An exemplary instance of this new style of work is provided by the French Communist Party, which, thanks to the united front and the People's Front, has succeeded in organizing the Left parties for resisting the formation of a Right government, and which rallied large masses of the people in the anti-fascist demonstration of July 14.

The strengthening of the front of the working people against the front of the frenzied bourgeoisie, the strengthening of the front of communism against the front of capitalism now depends on the activity of the Communists and on their ability to utilize every change in the policy of the bourgeoisie of their countries, every contradiction within the ruling classes in order to repulse reaction, fascism and the war-mongers.

The Era of the Second International Is Over

The era of the Second International in the ranks of the working-class movement is over. The situation in the capitalist countries, the position of world capitalism, which is unable to find a way out of its difficulties or to alleviate the want and hunger of the masses, shows that a new rise, a new blossoming of reformism is already impossible. True, in individual countries the Social-Democratic Parties may be able to strengthen themselves for a brief period; here and there they may still come to power and take part in bourgeois governments. But this would no longer be because the masses still cherish the illusion, that this will lead to socialism, but because the masses do not feel strong enough to overthrow the rule of the bourgeoisie and therefore think that the onslaughts of reaction may be restrained, even though it be with the help of Social-Democratic governments.

The Second International is in the throes of a profound political crisis. It is the crisis of world reformism, resulting from the aggravation of the entire world situation and caused by the regrouping of the masses which has begun, by their swing over to the fight against the bourgeoisie, by their swing towards revolution.

The crisis from which Social-Democracy and the entire Second International is suffering confronts the Social-Democratic workers and all honest Social-Democratic functionaries with the question: What next?

We have repeatedly proposed to the Executive Committee of the Second International the establishment of a united front for the purpose of combating the capitalist offensive, fascism and war. Striving not for mere declarations, but for a genuine struggle, we proposed in 1933 that negotiations should be undertaken between the individual parties. But the Second International rejected our proposal and declared that negotiations could be conducted only between the two Internationals. In 1934 we proposed to the Executive Committee of the Second International that direct negotiations be started in regard to concrete common action. Again our proposals were rejected. In 1935, before May Day, we once more proposed to the Executive Committee of the Second International to establish a united front. This time it declared that negotiations could take place between the parties, and not between the Internationals.

What does the Second International want? Whither is it seeking to lead the masses?

One or the other: it is either already unable to act as an international organization, or it is sabotaging the unity of the proletariat. If the leaders of the Second International hope to survive this difficult period for reformism too, if they believe that a favourable situation for reformism will once more return, we declare to the working-class masses that every manœuvre made by the Social-Democrats in the hope that a favourable situation for reformism will return is vain as far as the reformist leaders are concerned and catastrophic for the working class.

We propose to all Socialists, we propose to all Socialist Parties the only correct and possible way, namely, to march with us, the Communists, in a united front for the fight against fascism, war and capitalism—the fight for socialism.

We propose that all the revolutionary forces of the proletariat should be united in a single revolutionary party based on the tested

theoretical and organizational foundations of the teachings of Marx and Lenin.

We, the Communists of the entire world, are confronted by a task of the greatest importance, namely, to see to it by the work of our own Party that no chicanery of the bourgeoisie, that no demagoguery of any kind whatsoever should be allowed to dupe the masses who have become disillusioned with reformism—the task of leading the proletariat, on the basis of the united front, into the fight against the capitalist offensive, fascism and war, and of winning the proletariat for the revolution and for the fight for Soviet government.

Comrades, I now come to the last part of my report, which deals with the prospects of world development and the world revolution.

V. THE PROSPECTS OF WORLD DEVELOPMENT AND THE WORLD REVOLUTION

What are the prospects of world development, what are the prospects of the world revolution? The capitalist system has been shaken to its foundations by the development of the general crisis of capitalism, by the world economic crisis, by the increasing revolutionization of the working people and by the symptoms of a political crisis that are manifesting themselves in many countries.

The forces of the bourgeoisie have grown weaker; the forces of the proletariat have grown stronger. The relation of forces on a world scale has changed to the advantage of socialism and to the disadvantage of capitalism.

The U.S.S.R.—the Pride and Glory of the World Proletariat

The Soviet Union has become the most powerful and important factor in the world struggle for socialism. While at the time of the Sixth World Congress of the Communist International the U.S.S.R. was still a comparatively weak state, possessing no large-scale industry worth mentioning, today the Soviet Union has economically and politically become a powerful socialist country, based on a developed heavy industry and the best modern technique.

Today, the U.S.S.R. by its whole policy is exerting a daily increasing influence on the fate of world capitalism and on the development of the struggle for emancipation of the world proletariat and of the peoples of the colonial and dependent countries. In this steadily increasing influence of the victory of socialism in the Soviet

Union on world development and on the consciousness of the labouring masses in the capitalist countries is expressed the world-wide significance of the victory of socialism in a single country, a victory which cannot remain an isolated one but which will lead to the victory of socialism throughout the entire world.

We have not the slightest doubt that the change that has taken place among the labouring masses, a change that signifies that the masses have turned towards the revolutionary struggle against the capitalist offensive, fascism and war, has been to a decisive degree brought about by the successes achieved by the Soviet Union. These successes have demonstrated to the entire world that the working class is capable of building up a new, socialist society by its own efforts and that socialism is leading the working people to a happy, free and prosperous life.

The superiority of the new, socialist economic system over the capitalist economic system, the superiority of the new, socialist order of society over bourgeois class society, the striking contrast between the U.S.S.R. and the fascist countries, represent a force which, if the Communists carry on serious and energetic work, is capable within a few years of definitely destroying the mass influence of reformism.

At the same time, the victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R. proves that the victory of socialism throughout the entire world is inevitable.

On the basis of the colossal advantages of socialist economy, which is backed by the best modern technique and by collectivized agriculture, on the basis of the consolidation of public property, the standard of living and culture of the working people will continue to rise with extraordinary rapidity, the economic and political power of the Soviet Union will continue to grow and Soviet democracy for all the working people will be further perfected.

The Land of Soviets will increasingly stand forth to the world as a land of advanced culture and technique, as a land of peace and well-being for the entire people, as a land of democracy and freedom, as a great socialist country, in which every person possesses the opportunity of fully developing his individual gifts and abilities.

From the victory of socialism in the Soviet Union and the unlimited prospects for the further development of the Soviet Union towards socialism, we derive the certitude that our influence over the masses of the working people of the entire world will increase with enormous rapidity, that the victory of socialism will cause the working class of all countries to turn to communism and will lead to the victory of socialism all over the world.

All that is required is peace, which will ensure new victories for socialism in the U.S.S.R. All that is required is the possibility of enlightening and organizing the toilers in the capitalist countries; all that is required to ensure our victory on a world scale in a historically short space of time is the energy, strength of will and devotion of the Communists to the cause of the fight for socialism.

If not quite fifty years were required from the first real bourgeois revolution, the Great French Revolution of 1789, to the time when a wave of bourgeois revolutions swept over Europe, destroying the power of feudalism, not a longer, but a considerably shorter period of time will be required from the victory of the first socialist revolution, the great October Revolution of 1917, to the victory of socialism throughout the world.

The Revolutionary Crisis Is Maturing

But the capitalist system will not quit the stage of world history without a struggle.

The capitalist system is enfeebled, but capitalism has succeeded in emerging from the lowest level of the economic crisis. Yet, three years after the lowest point of the crisis was passed, production in the majority of countries has not attained the pre-war level—despite the great influence which preparations for war have exercised on the growth of production. The contraction of foreign trade as a result of disturbed international economic relations still persists.

The tremendous increase in unemployment as compared to pre-crisis days, the extraordinary depressed standard of living of all the working people, the agrarian crisis in the peasant countries, the exceptionally low level of capitalist investments in industry in the overwhelming majority of countries, the enormously increased parasitism of the state, the seizure by the state of a considerable part of the national income in the form of taxation for the purpose of financing war preparations and maintaining swollen government staffs—all this has severely contracted the home markets of the imperialist countries.

To this must be added the fact that the tremendous increase in strength of the monopolist trusts and cartels, which endeavour to maintain high prices in the home market, prevents the extension of the market and the absorption of commodity stocks, and results in the accelerated accumulation of new commodity stocks. Prohibitive tariffs, the destruction of the remnants of free trade, commercial war, dumping, the contraction of the colonial markets, the continued crisis in the

colonies and the disturbance of the international credit and currency systems are preventing the restoration of international ties and the growth of foreign trade. And this sets narrow limits to a possible increase of industrial production and renders extremely difficult any serious improvement in production common to all countries.

The generally strained relations between classes and states, the direct danger of war and symptoms of political crisis in a number of countries create an uneasy situation which is not conducive to a consolidation of the economic system and to economic improvement.

It follows from what has been said that the general crisis of capitalism, against the background of which the economic crisis is developing, has created a situation in which the conditions inimical to economic development will persist, preventing any serious improvement in capitalist economy and furthering the process of its decay.

Owing to these causes, there prevails in most countries a distinct tendency for the depression of a special kind to be further prolonged, and the short-lived improvement of production, uneven in different countries and branches, will most probably be accompanied by new spells of economic crisis.

This economic situation, which is marked by the continuation of the depression of a special kind and is condemning tens of millions of unemployed in all countries to starvation and extinction, and hundreds of millions of workers, peasants, intellectuals, urban petty bourgeois and colonial slaves to a pauper existence, has still further widened the chasm between the handful of monopolists of finance capital and the major mass of the people, who have been plunged into the abyss of poverty and despair.

Faith in capitalism, in the ability of the leaders of capitalist economy and the state to find a way out of the crisis towards a new prosperity, has been undermined among vast masses of the people. The prestige of imperialism has been enfeebled in the colonies, all the economic, social and political foundations of bourgeois society have been shaken, so that the ruling classes themselves are compelled to resort to anti-capitalist demagogy.

This is the kind of situation which renders the contrast between capitalism and socialism most striking in the eyes of the masses, the kind of situation in which the struggle of the oppressed against the oppressors will become rapidly accentuated, the indignation of the masses at the capitalist regime will continue to grow, the revolutionary crisis to mature, and the idea of storming the citadel of capitalism to mature in the minds of ever larger masses of proletarians.

It may, however, happen that in certain countries capitalist economy, having overcome the conditions inimical to its development, may still experience a temporary improvement and alleviate the condition of the bourgeoisie in these countries. But in view of the accentuation of the general crisis of capitalism, such an improvement of capitalist economy cannot lead to stabilization and to the ebb of the tide of revolution. On the contrary, it will intensify the struggle between the various groups of the bourgeoisie, who will hasten to profit by the improved situation; it will intensify the struggle in the world arena, because the markets are shut off by tariff barriers and because, finally, an improvement in any given country will be achieved at the expense of other countries, which will thus be forced into the background.

All this will aggravate the entire political situation; the war danger will increase, while the uncertainty of the masses as to their immediate future will not diminish. This means that, whatever the course of economic development during the next few years may be, the decay of capitalism has advanced so far that a serious improvement in the condition of capitalism is already impossible. This means that the entire development of capitalism is leading to the maturing of the revolutionary crisis.

The decline of the capitalist system, on the one hand, and the victory of socialism in the Soviet Union and its growing influence among the working people in the capitalist countries, on the other, are revolutionizing the labouring masses of the entire world and are rendering the position of the ruling classes increasingly uncertain and insecure.

The bourgeoisie feels its weakness and isolation. The bourgeoisie is therefore no longer able to retain the democratic mask which helped it to accomplish its rule; it is compelled to lay this mask aside. The bourgeoisie—by necessity and not of its own free will—is being compelled more and more, and in an increasing number of countries, to strive to maintain its rule by exchanging parliamentary methods for a terrorist, fascist method of government, by robbing the working people of the last remnants of democratic rights and the right to protect their interests.

Fascism Means War

But the policy of autarky, of economic nationalism, pursued by the fascists in order to deliver the entire home market to the native bourgeoisie for the purpose of plundering the masses, tends to disor-

ganize foreign trade and currency still more. The orientation towards a new repartition of the world is intensifying the military yoke, increasingly upsetting state finances, resulting in an increasing part of the national income being seized in order to finance preparations for war, and rendering the condition of the labouring masses more and more unfavourable.

The extreme chauvinism of the fascists and the preparations for war being made by the big fascist countries are tending to accentuate chauvinism and the race for armaments all over the capitalist world.

Wherever the bourgeoisie has succeeded in establishing a fascist dictatorship, however, the eyes of the working-class masses are being opened more and more by oppression, loss of rights, increased exploitation and warmongering to the fact that fascism acts not in the interests of the people but exclusively in the interests of the financial oligarchy. There, under the shadow of the fascist dictatorship, the indignation of the masses against fascism is growing.

The offensive of the bourgeoisie, its attempts to establish a fascist dictatorship, have already led to political crises in Austria, Spain and France. Now, when the worker already knows what fascism has in store for him, the resistance of the masses to the establishment of a fascist dictatorship will grow daily, the discontent of the masses will steadily gain in intensity.

Socialism Means Peace

We are convinced that war can be averted by a joint struggle for peace waged by the proletariat of the capitalist countries and the Soviet Union.

If it becomes possible, by means of the struggle of the Soviet Union and the working people of all countries, to prevent imperialism from starting a new world massacre, and to preserve peace, this will not only be evidence of a tremendous increase in the strength of the proletariat, but will also result in the fact that the building of socialism in the Soviet Union and the increasing contrast between the Soviet Union and the capitalist world will ensure an enormous advance in the revolutionizing of the labouring masses.

If, thanks to the struggle for peace of the Soviet Union and the working people of all capitalist countries, war can be delayed even for a certain time, this also will better enable the proletariat to strengthen its position in the capitalist countries, to strengthen the power of the

Soviet Union and to create more favourable conditions for transforming a war between the imperialists, or a war of the imperialists against the Soviet Union, into a successful and victorious revolution.

However, should the proletariat not succeed in preventing war, the new world war launched by the imperialists will be a war of the imperialist bandits for plundering the peoples of the Soviet Union, for enslaving the small and weak peoples who are today independent, and for the redivision of the colonies and spheres of influence of the imperialist Great Powers.

The war will entail unspeakable misery for all the working people. Will the working people tolerate it?

If the war waged by Japan against the Chinese people has already started a ferment among the masses of the people of both countries and has awakened an urge on the part of the best representatives of the Chinese people to unite for a common fight, shoulder to shoulder with the Chinese Red Army, if Germany's war preparations have started an anti-war movement all over the world, there can be no doubt that the launching of a war by the imperialists against the Soviet Union, or by the imperialists against each other, will lead to an open collision between all contradictions of the imperialist system and will cause the proletariat of all countries, the labouring masses of the whole world and whole peoples to intensify the class struggle to the utmost.

The unleashing of war by the imperialists will mark the beginning of a revolutionary crisis throughout the capitalist world.

The task of the proletariat of the world will be to fight for the victory of revolution and for the transformation of the imperialist war into a civil war against the bourgeoisie.

Whatever may be the course of future development, it is leading to revolution.

The revolutionary crisis is not yet matured, but it is maturing all over the world. By its frantic preparations for war and its attempts to set up the fascist dictatorship in more and more countries, the bourgeoisie is rendering the situation increasingly acute and accelerating the maturing of the crisis.

The following words of Lenin describe the situation:

"The bourgeoisie behaves like an arrogant brigand who has lost his head, it commits blunder after blunder, thus making the position more acute and hastening its own doom.... The revolutionary parties must now 'prove' by their practice that they are sufficiently intelligent and organized, have contacts with the exploited

masses, are sufficiently determined and skilful to utilize this crisis for a successful and victorious revolution."¹

No social system falls of itself, however rotten it may be. It must be overthrown. No revolutionary crisis can bring victory to the proletariat if the proletariat cannot organize and win victory.

Under the Banner of Lenin and Stalin, Forward to Storm Capitalism

Our task is to organize the labouring masses who are rising against capitalism into a solid revolutionary army of the proletariat and to lead them to storm capitalism.

Our world Congress must strengthen the determination of all proletarians to heal the split in the ranks of the working class, to establish a broad united front which will be capable of mobilizing the widest sections of the people in the fight against the capitalist offensive, fascism and war.

Our world Congress must show the proletariat the way to a single revolutionary party based on the unshakable foundation of Marxism-Leninism.

We must all of us leave this congress clearly realizing that the fate of the proletariat and of all mankind depends on us and on our work.

Our chief slogan is—Fight for Soviet government!

Our banner is the banner of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin.

Our leader is Stalin.

Under this banner, we must penetrate to the masses, we must establish closer ties with the masses, we must broaden the united front of the proletariat.

Communists, weld the revolutionary class into a vast, single, organized political army. (*Loud and prolonged applause, passing into an ovation. All rise.*)

¹ V. I. Lenin. *Selected Works*, Eng. ed. Vol. X.

FOURTH¹ TO THIRTEENTH SITTINGS

(July 27-August 1, 1935)

DISCUSSION OF THE REPORT ON THE ACTIVITIES OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Presiding (*by turns*): Okano, Arndt, Thorez, Browder, Clark,
Marty, Pieck, Ercoli, Henderson, Campbell.

FRANZ: In discussing our problems and deliberating on our tactics at this congress, we must lay particular stress on two important and decisive events:

1. The defeat of the working class in Germany and the accession to power of Hitler fascism;
2. The great success achieved by our brother party in France in developing the united front and the People's Front for the repulse of fascism.

Why was it possible for fascism to emerge victorious in Germany? The answer to this question is of the greatest importance for the international working class.

Germany was hit most strongly by the world economic crisis. There, the downward curve of production reached the lowest point. The rate at which the middle classes in town and country were becoming impoverished might be compared only to the rate at which the American farmers were being reduced to ruin. For years on end half the industrial workers of Germany had been jobless and starving without any hope of finding work. If, in spite of these facts, and in spite of our correct appraisal of the situation, it was not the working class that

¹ The third sitting was taken up with the report of the International Control Commission.

achieved victory, but the bourgeoisie which came out on top by establishing its fascist dictatorship, it is the German Social-Democratic Party that is historically responsible for this.

The Social-Democratic Party split the German working class during the World War; and it further widened the split after 1918 by its policy of economic peace and coalition with the bourgeoisie. Two lines of policy opposed each other in the German labour movement. By its policy of economic peace and of the lesser evil the Social-Democratic Party held the masses back during the crisis from taking action against capitalism, thereby hindering the working class from displaying its strength and preventing it from winning over to its side the urban middle classes and the labouring peasants. Thus it made it easier for the fascists to penetrate into these petty-bourgeois sections of the population.

Although the Communist Party made great efforts to establish a united front, it failed to show sufficient flexibility in the practical application of the united front policy; it was not sufficiently able to establish close contact with the Social-Democratic workers; it did not lay sufficient stress on the struggle for democratic rights and liberties, as the French Communists have now begun successfully to do; and it has often advanced the slogan of Soviet government in an abstract manner. It did not concentrate in its work on the large trade unions and on the mass organizations of the proletariat, and, as a result, did not succeed in detaching the decisive section of the working class from reformism and in winning over the majority of the workers.

These mistakes, comrades, were further aggravated by the fact that the Party often concentrated its main fire against Social-Democracy at a time when the main fire should already have been directed against the principal enemy of the working class—against fascism, which was growing at a menacing rate. But at the same time we say quite openly to the Social-Democratic workers that it was the leadership of the Social-Democratic Party—by its policy of collaboration with the bourgeoisie, of persecuting the Communists, of breaking strikes and firing at workers' demonstrations—that lent direct assistance to the fascists and paved the way for their accession to power.

We strove to overcome the split between the organized and the unorganized workers. We supported the workers in their determination to decide their own fate and to resist compulsory state arbitration. It was thanks to this that the Communist Party of Germany scored successes in the struggle of the iron and steel workers of the Ruhr in 1928, in the strike of the metal workers in Berlin, in the strike of the Ruhr miners,

and in other struggles. At the same time, however—owing to our neglect of work within the trade unions—we failed to develop and extend our successes. Our successes stood in the way of the policy of coalition and economic peace pursued by the reformist leaders, and the latter retaliated with mass expulsions of the champions of the interests of the workers in the economic struggles. We accordingly had to consolidate still further the revolutionary trade union opposition. In this connection our Comrade Thaelmann repeatedly stressed the necessity of our working in the reformist mass organizations and emphasized that this would have to become the starting point for correct Communist work among the masses. When we withdrew the slogan, "Join the Free Trade Unions," we overlooked the fact that, in view of the tendency among the Communists to neglect work in the trade unions in general, we had actually gotten into a situation where the Revolutionary Trade Union Opposition had developed into a substitute of the trade unions, and we paid still less attention to work in the reformist trade unions.

The Party was not sufficiently permeated with the Leninist principle that we must carry on revolutionary work in the trade unions.

All the great successes which our Party had scored prior to Hitler's accession to power—the increase of the Party membership to 360,000, the formation of sympathizing mass organizations with a total membership of nearly a million workers, the great election successes with about six million votes cast for our candidates, our successes in repelling the fascist raids in the working-class districts—could not compensate for our great weaknesses, which lay in the fact that, as a result of our neglect of work in the reformist trade unions we had failed to win over the decisive sections of the working class, who were organized in the trade unions.

Another effect of our lack of contact with the masses in the Free Trade Unions was the fact that the revolutionary unemployed movement was for the most part made up of unorganized workers. As a result of the hopelessness of their position large sections of the unemployed were the more easily duped by the promises of the National-Socialists.

Comrades, the example of Germany brings home the lesson that only by concentrating our work on the factories and mass organizations can we successfully ward off the fascist peril.

Our differences with the Social-Democratic Party were considerably accentuated by the shooting down of thirty-two workers in Berlin on May 1, 1929, at the order of Zoergiebel, the Social-Democratic Chief

of Police. Similar actions of Social-Democratic leaders occurred in many other places in Germany.

The fact that a section of the Social-Democratic functionaries tolerated this policy hindered the formation of a united front and heightened the tendency in the ranks of our Party to treat the Social-Democratic leaders and the Social-Democratic masses alike. This found its most glaring expression in the theory that all of them are "little Zoergiebels."

In the situation that prevailed in Germany in 1928-29 there could be no question of approaching the top leadership of the Social-Democratic Party with offers of a united front. But in that period we also neglected to build up a united front from below, a united front between the lower organizations. It was only when the fascist danger became acute that we repeatedly approached the Social-Democratic and trade union leadership with proposals to establish a united front. But all our offers were rejected by the Social-Democratic leaders, who met with no appreciable opposition against this policy on the part of large masses inside the Social-Democratic Party. This policy of theirs was facilitated by our politically incorrect attitude towards the Social-Democratic workers.

As opposed to the social demagogy of the fascists, our Party proclaimed its "program of the social and national liberation of the German people," which was to open the way for us to the lower middle classes. But we did not make this program the centre of our policies. Owing to our underestimation of the national question, the fascists succeeded in diverting the anger of the masses at the effects of the capitalist regime by playing up the oppression of the Versailles Treaty and the Weimar Republic's weak policy of capitulation to the western powers.

It was particularly the German youth that fell an easy prey to this nationalist demagogy. In a spirit of self-criticism we must say that our Party itself neglected its work among the labouring youth and allowed our Youth League to become a youth party with vanguard and sectarian notions, and thus failed to prevent fascism from gaining a hold among the working-class youth.

The same applies to our work among the peasants and the middle classes. To be sure, we had a good "program for peasant relief"; but in our policy in the rural districts we failed to stress the immediate problems of the peasants, such as the questions of prices, markets, taxes, tariffs, etc. Nor did we work in the peasant organizations.

The comrades in the other countries must take our experiences

to heart: they must realize that only by building up a united fighting front will they be able to bar the road to fascism and to repel and defeat it.

The shortcomings of our united front tactics and of our work among the masses were the cause of our Party's failure to free the majority of the working class from the influence of the reformists; and we German Communists self-critically take the blame for this.

Comrades, the German Communists, Young Communist League members and Red Front Fighters carried on a heroic and self-sacrificing struggle to prevent the fascists from coming into power. In many cities united fronts were formed for the defence of the working-class districts and streets, of trade union headquarters and people's centres. When the Von Papen government tried to put into effect universal wage cuts the Party organized resistance, against the will of the trade unions and Social-Democracy. About nine hundred complete and partial strikes took place during that period. In the race against fascist development, the revolutionary forces under the leadership of our Party began to make up for lost time, rapidly gaining ground and threatening to stem the tide of fascism and force it back. At that time signs of disintegration became apparent in the ranks of the Nazis. In the November elections of 1932 the vote cast for the Nazis fell to 11,700,000, as against the 13,700,000 they had polled in July 1932. At the same time the Communist vote increased from 5,300,000 to 6,000,000.

Had a united front been established at this point, as a preliminary to a general strike, the road could still have been successfully blocked to fascism and the entire development of Germany would have taken a different course. But the leaders of the Socialist Party of Germany and of the General Federation of German Trade Unions (A.D.G.B.) forbade their organizations to form a united front with the Communists. They sabotaged the struggle of the workers against the fascists, to the very last moment, and called upon their members to boycott the stupendous demonstration of the Berlin workers in front of the Karl Liebknecht House on January 22, 1933. Thus it came about that on the evening of January 30 the bourgeoisie, with the acquiescence of the Social-Democratic leaders, was able to hand the power over to the fascist Hitler.

Comrades, the proposal of the Communist Party of Germany to the Socialist Party of Germany and the A.D.G.B. to issue a joint call for a general strike was rejected. Our Party did its utmost to organize mass resistance. But, comrades, without the support of the

decisive Social-Democratic and trade union masses, the Communist Party alone could not undertake a decisive struggle against the entire power of the state. It was due to the Social-Democratic policy of class collaboration and the consequent split in the working class that fascism emerged victorious in Germany.

Even after Hitler's accession to power there persisted the two lines of policy of the German working class; the line of the revolutionary class struggle, which is the line of the Communist Party, and the line of cooperation with the bourgeoisie—the line of reformism.

From the very outset of the fascist dictatorship the terror of the fascist gangs has been directed mainly against the Communist Party.

It was primarily against the Communist Party that the Reichstag fire provocation was directed, and it is the Communist Party that has made extremely great sacrifices in continuing its work. Under the new circumstances our Party units have developed exceptionally great initiative, have taken independent decisions in determining their attitude to political events, and have offered serious resistance. They have flooded the streets in the working-class districts of the big cities with illegal literature, and even under the conditions of the worst terror, when every Communist faced the threat of concentration camp, prison or death, our comrades fought in the factories for the election of Red shop committees.

Comrades, the Communist Party alone has held the banner of the revolutionary class struggle aloft in Germany and has saved the honour of the working class. The Communist Party alone led the partial movements of the workers against the dissolution and "coordination" of the working-class organizations and against the plunder of the workers' property. The Communist Party has fought for the rights of the workers, for their right to self-determination, and against the fascist commissars. When the reformist trade union leaders capitulated of their own accord, the Communist Party put forward the slogan of defending the trade unions.

Our Party has been able to display such heroism under the most trying conditions of underground work only because it was led for many years by such a Bolshevik as Ernst Thaelmann (*loud applause*)—Ernst Thaelmann, whom we greet from this platform, too, as the leader of the revolutionary proletariat of Germany (*applause*), who devoted all his life to the working class, and who trained our whole Party in the spirit of our great prototype—the Communist Party of the Soviet Union—and of our great leader Stalin.

We have been able to perform such great work because our Party

has built up a force of revolutionaries who, on thousands of occasions, have paid with their lives for their devotion and fidelity to their convictions. Never in the history of the working-class movement of a capitalist country has so much mass heroism been displayed as our Party has displayed under the fascist dictatorship in Germany. (*Applause.*)

The organizer of our illegal Communist Party, our unforgettable Jonny Scheer, was snatched from the ranks of the German working class and led to his death by the fascist executioners. To the very last minute of his life Franz Stenzer, member of our Central Committee, worked for the communist cause. August Luetgens, Rudi Schwarz, Steinfurth, and three thousand other comrades who have been illegally or legally murdered, fought for the cause of the German working class to their last breath.

The heroism of the German Communists has been possible only because the German working class has the example of the great socialist construction in the Soviet Union before its eyes, and because our world communist movement itself is headed by such great heroes as Georgi Dimitrov (*loud applause*), whom the German workers proudly call: "Our Dimitrov." (*Applause.*) His example has produced such heroes of the German working class as Fiete Schulze, who ascended the scaffold with the proud words: "In spite of everything, victory will be ours!" (*Applause.*)

We German Communists are grateful to you, Comrade Dimitrov, for the example of great courage and heroism which you showed when you confronted Goering and Goebbels and exposed them as incendiaries and henchmen of capitalism, thus earning the admiration of the whole world. You rendered decisive help in leading the German working class out of its state of depression, you fired with enthusiasm hundreds of thousands of Social-Democrats and petty bourgeois. Your exploit, Comrade Dimitrov, was a decisive factor in rallying and giving impetus to the united front in all countries. It is as a result of your courageous stand that the cultured and advanced section of humanity has begun to unite against the fascist warmongers, and that the revolutionary fighters of Germany enjoy the widespread sympathy of the workers and middle-class people throughout the world. To be a Dimitrov—that is the highest title of honour that the revolutionary proletariat of the world can confer. (*Loud applause.*)

Comrades, thanks to the unremitting struggle of our Party and the steadily growing resistance in the factories on the part of sec-

tions of the Social-Democratic workers as well, the German fascists have failed in all their attempts to subdue the hatred of the majority of the working class. Their various measures—the seizure of the Free Trade Unions and their consequent dissolution; the establishment of the fascist Labour Front as the largest mass organization, including both workers and employers; the organization of the fascist propaganda centre known as “Strength through Joy”; the promulgation of the fascist labour law abrogating the wage rate agreements, making participation in any strike punishable with penal servitude, and giving the employer the status of dictator in his enterprise—have all failed to keep the working class from continuing its class struggle. Through our illegal press and our illegal organizations we have made every effort to furnish the working class with weapons against fascism. During the election of the shop representative councils in 1934 the majority of the workers in the factories accepted and followed our slogans.

Comrades, the great events in Austria and France in February, and in Spain in October, of 1934 have lent a new stimulus to the will of the German working class to consolidate its ranks, to form a united front and to fight against fascism. They have also contributed to the change in the attitude of large sections of Social-Democratic workers to bourgeois democracy and proletarian dictatorship.

We remember with profound gratitude the great manifestations of solidarity given us and the fighters in Germany by the workers and all the working people throughout the world.

During this period we have often had to contend with a tendency to rely on spontaneity, which was manifested even in the Party leadership and which led to the Party's lagging behind events, to strong sectarianism and to our overshooting the mark in the appraisal of the situation and in our slogans.

The events mentioned and the change in the sentiments of the masses have brought about a change also in the ranks of the German Social-Democratic Party. After the suppression of German Social-Democracy by Hitler, the Socialist Party of Germany was for more than a year broken up as an organized party, and the existing groups had practically no contact with one another. The Central Committee of the S.P.G. in Prague tried to inculcate in the working class the ideology of “watching and waiting” and of “doing nothing” until the “period of reaction” is over. But a section of the advanced Social-Democratic functionaries and workers were already cooperating with the Communists.

Large masses of Social-Democratic workers began to take a more

and more decisive stand against the Prague Central Committee and against reformism. An increasing number of groups of Social-Democratic workers agreed with us on many questions. They hated fascism, but they were not yet ready to join the Communist Party and, to a certain extent, still cherished the illusion that a military dictatorship was about to be established, which would allow the working class greater freedom of action.

The mistake of our Party leadership during that period was that it failed to notice in time the change that was taking place in the Social-Democratic camp. On the other hand, it often entertained the view that the Social-Democratic Party had been utterly destroyed and that the ideology of reformism had been fully overcome. Instead of taking account of the new situation, the Party leadership took a narrow view of the united front and tried to reduce it to the recruiting of members into the Communist Party. As a result, it displayed a sectarian attitude to the Social-Democratic workers. It was due to such mistakes and shortcomings that our entire organization was caught unawares by, and was not sufficiently prepared for, such important events as those of June 30, 1934, when fascist leaders were murdered and the centre of gravity was shifted to the Reichswehr. This made it impossible for us to utilize the events of June 30, 1934, for an assault by the working class against the fascist dictatorship. The Party, and particularly the Berlin organization, made use of the events of June 30 to intensify its agitation by increasing the distribution of leaflets and the publication of numerous newspapers. It also organized discussion groups in the streets and discussions in the factories. However, the Party was still isolated from the masses. In their hatred for the storm troopers—for those of the torture-chambers and the concentration camps—the leading Party forces declined to enter into any discussion with the disillusioned and disorganized sections of the storm troops.

The events of June 30, which seriously shook the Nazi regime, wrought a great change in the mass basis of fascism and brought about further changes in the camp of the Social-Democratic workers. It was incumbent upon our Party immediately to draw the necessary lessons from the events of June 30 and to alter its tactics of work among the masses accordingly. However, we failed to take sufficient note of the leftward swing of the Social-Democratic workers, and there were differences of opinion in our Party leadership with regard to the "Left" Social-Democratic leaders, such as Aufhaeuser and Boechel, who in words came out in favour of the united

front. In the further course of events differences of opinion arose on the question of a broad united front with the Social-Democratic organizations and of the re-establishment of the Free Trade Unions.

Owing to these differences and disagreements among its leadership, the Party lost time and fell behind in its work of forming a united front, establishing contact with the leadership of the Social-Democratic organizations, and restoring the Free Trade Unions.

Now, a few words about the work of the Party at present. Our Party is striving, particularly since the elections to the shop representative councils, to win the masses for the struggle for their everyday interests and for their rights and democratic liberties. To this end it is endeavouring to utilize every legal possibility for struggle in the factories and inside the fascist mass organizations.

The Party has been showing considerably more flexibility in its practical work in posing the question of a united front before the Social-Democratic workers and their regional and district committees. The Party also aims at arriving at central agreements with the Central Committee of the S.P.G. Favourable sentiment among the workers, the leftward swing among the Social-Democratic functionaries, and our own greater flexibility and initiative have contributed to the development of a loose, but broad, united front from below, expressed primarily in joint solidarity actions of Communists and Social-Democrats for the political prisoners, in the re-establishment of the groups of the Free Trade Unions and, on a particularly broad scale, in the last elections to the shop representative councils.

Sentiment in the country and the increasing pressure exerted by the Social-Democratic organizations upon their Central Committee have compelled the latter also to change its attitude somewhat. But the Social-Democratic Central Committee still believes that it can refuse to enter into agreements with the leadership of our Party, as it did in the case of our offers for joint action during the elections to the shop representative councils and in the fight against Hitler's war policy.

The most advanced sections of our Party are continually furnishing examples of good new methods of work among the masses under illegal conditions. An increasing number of our units have been passing from mere agitation to work in the fascist mass organizations. The Party has begun to develop forms of work which enable the illegal Communists to resort to legal methods of organizing movements and partial actions for immediate demands and for democratic liberties. In the struggle against the National-Socialist

ideology the Party is beginning to learn to use the fascist catch-words against the fascists themselves.

Nevertheless, we cannot as yet claim that the Party has already effected a real turn. We still suffer from serious defects in our work, primarily in the struggle against chauvinism and the preparations for war, against Hitler fascism as the chief instigator of war in Europe. In face of the great and increasing tasks confronting the Young Communist League under the fascist dictatorship, the Party has lent the League but little assistance in its work of overcoming the isolation of the Communist youth from the large masses of the labouring youth who now belong to the fascist youth organizations. The Party has failed to show the Young Communist League what new methods it must use in order to win over the youth, and has thus allowed the League to get into a crisis. Hence, one of the first and major tasks confronting the entire Party is that of effecting a fundamental change in its attitude to the Young Communist League and to the working-class youth as a whole. The Party must make it clear to all its units and to all the labouring masses that it will be impossible to oppose the preparations for a new war, and to create the conditions for the overthrow of the fascist dictatorship, unless we succeed in imbuing the large masses of the youth in the fascist organizations and in the Army with an anti-fascist and anti-capitalist spirit, and unless we succeed in rallying all the non-reactionary forces of the youth and drawing them into the great People's Front against fascism.

During the fight against the establishment of the fascist dictatorship in Germany, the decisive task was to work in the great trade union organizations and to link up our work with the small daily issues in order to rally large masses to the decisive struggle. We committed grave errors and were guilty of serious shortcomings with regard to carrying out the fundamental principles of Lenin's teaching that constant contact must be maintained with the masses and that we must work even in the most reactionary organizations, if large masses of workers and working people in general are to be found in them. In the struggle against the fascist dictatorship, decisive importance is attached to our work in the fascist mass organizations. Unless we engage in this work on a large scale we shall not be able to fulfil any of our tasks. Without this work we cannot utilize the legal possibilities for revolutionary struggle, nor can we carry on a real fight for democratic rights and liberties for the working class and emerge from the depths of our underground existence. Unless we

carry on such work, every action of the working class against facism will continue to exact heavy sacrifices on the part of the best and most class conscious sections of the proletariat, and all our attempts to establish a united front will prove vain in face of the great difficulties of work in secrecy and under conditions of illegality.

Just as it was impossible to prevent the establishment of the fascist dictatorship because we had failed to carry on work in the trade unions, so will it be impossible to bring about the overthrow of the fascist dictatorship unless we carry on work in the fascist mass organizations. (*Applause.*)

BROWDER: Comrades, in order to transform our Party into a mass party, we had to go through two cleansings. The first dealt with the Trotskyites, who merged under the leadership of Cannon and Schachtman in the fall of 1928, they were quickly repudiated by the Party, isolated and expelled. The second purge of the Right wing Lovestone faction was more difficult but equally complete. The Seventh Convention of our Party in 1930 already registered the complete liquidation of organized factions in the Party.

Since 1930 we can characterize the work of our Party as one of a progressive development along the path of Bolshevik mass work, the rooting of the Party among the masses. This development has been uneven both in time and in the enormous areas of our country. The advances have been won only by constant struggle and vigilance against the weaknesses and recurring deviations arising out of our sectarian past and origin of our Party.

We can register very definite advances, however, in almost all fields of our work. First, the Party has multiplied its membership over threefold, to more than thirty thousand members at the present time; has built a broad body of cadres in mass work; has shifted its base from the foreign born immigrant population more and more towards the native American workers. Where there was less than 10 per cent native workers in the Party in 1930, there are now over 40 per cent. Where in 1930 there were less than 100 Negroes in our Party, there are now more than 2,500. (*Applause.*) This change in the composition of our Party is progressing constantly further in the same direction.

The Party has entrenched itself in a series of trade union organizations including some of the most important industries, and established not only a growing influence but certain organizational

strongholds from which this influence could be protected from attacks and further extended.

During this period the Party took the lead in organizing the unemployed into mass organizations. Since the rise of a multitude of rival organizations of the unemployed the Party initiated the struggle for complete organizational unification of all the unemployed organizations in the United States.

The Party began seriously to extend its leadership over the non-proletarian strata, among farmers, among students, among the Negro population, among the city toiling population, including the professionals and intellectuals. It has considerable political and organizational results in this work.

Our Party has been the guiding force in the development of a thriving and widely influential revolutionary cultural movement, in literature, the theatre, in all fields of cultural and artistic social life.

In the fight against war and fascism we have developed a movement which has involved constantly broadening masses. The same in the fight for civil rights, for Negro rights.

And especially the slogan for the united front of the workers and of all oppressed has penetrated the masses. In the past six months the agitation and organizational work for a broad Labour Party in the United States is coming to the forefront of our work.

By its mass influence our Party has brought about a differentiation within the Socialist Party and the A.F.L., and even penetrated such movements as still remain within the framework of the old capitalist parties, such as the E.P.I.C. movement, the Utopian movement, the Technocrats, etc.

Our Party has become, through these various activities, one of the recognized political factors in the national life.

In some of the most important strike struggles—in the first place, the San Francisco General Strike—the Communist Party has been the most decisive and leading influence. In our work in the strike field we have learned to organize and lead strikes, but, no less important than that, we have also learned how to end strikes and how to bring them to a conclusion with victories and with partial victories.

During the rise of the strike wave, masses of workers were streaming into the trade unions; in 1933, especially, it became a mass movement. These masses, in the largest part, went into the unions of the American Federation of Labour. This brought about a transformation of those conditions which, since 1928, had made

it necessary for the revolutionary workers to build independent unions in many important industries where the A.F.L. refused to organize the workers. It now became possible to raise the slogan of trade union unification in the most practical way, actually to carry through the fusion of the independent unions of the Trade Union Unity League with the larger reformist organizations, in spite of the determined and energetic resistance of the higher officials of the A.F.L. This process of unification took on many forms.

The result is that we have a growing mass influence in the A.F.L. Our experience shows the enormous part the united front slogan plays when carried into life.

I want to give briefly some experience in the unemployed movement. We formulated our demand for insurance into a definite proposed legislative Bill for Congress. This Bill was printed in millions of copies and distributed throughout the working-class organizations in all parts of the country. A tremendous support was developed for it although the A.F.L. fought against it, with parts of the leadership of the Socialist Party. In January of this year, in a great Unemployment Insurance Congress in Washington, we had 2,500 delegates, eighty per cent of these delegates represented non-Communists coming from broad mass organizations with more than a million members, including a large section of A.F.L. unions. From that congress the movement for unemployment insurance was carried to still higher levels and by this also led to the development of a parliamentary struggle for the enactment of the Bill. In this parliamentary struggle we were under the handicap that as yet we do not have a single Communist Congressman.

However, in the Congress itself we brought mass pressure to bear upon all Congressmen of the Republican and Democratic Parties, concentrating on particular areas from which the Congressman came, flooding him with demands from workers' organizations of his constituency that he support the Workers' Bill, with the result that when the vote came in Congress as between Roosevelt's measure for unemployment insurance and our Bill, we got 52 votes without having a single Communist Congressman even to lead and organize the fight.

Among the youth, we must say that we lagged behind for a long time, and it was only at our Eighth Convention, a little over a year ago, that we finally made a decisive turn of bringing the Party into active leadership and helping to build the mass youth movement. The results were almost immediate. A united front of the Y.C.L.

with the Young Progressives and the Young Socialists was formed.

In the last Youth Congress held just this month in Detroit, there were almost 1,300 youth delegates from all over the country, fully empowered to represent their membership, representing some 1,300,000 organized youth. In addition to that, there were another thousand delegates without full authority to commit their organizations, participating in the congress as observers to report back to their organizations.

The American Youth Congress in this last convention issued a special appeal to the American youth called the Declaration of Rights of the Young Generation. This document, already being distributed in a million copies, will undoubtedly be another tremendous force in further extending and consolidating the Youth Congress.

It is necessary to say a word or two about our work among the Negro population in the United States. The outstanding feature of this work has been our taking up and carrying through the fight for the freedom of the nine Scottsboro boys in Alabama, a case in which for four years now we have been successful in preventing the legal murder of these nine Negro boys; we have carried the case to the Supreme Court twice, have got the case sent back to the lower court for retrial and are still fighting this case. There is no doubt that these nine Scottsboro boys would have been electrocuted several years ago but for the tremendous mass movement which has involved millions of white people and the mass of Negro population and which has become an international issue.

The second struggle has been the Herndon case, where a young Communist Negro organizer was sentenced to twenty years on the chain gang for organizing a joint meeting of white and Negro workers in the State of Georgia. We have developed a real mass campaign throughout the country involving large circles beyond any we have touched on any other issue, and especially rousing through this case the whole struggle for Negro rights and rousing the Negro population of America.

We have appropriated the traditions of 1776 and 1861, and we have come forward as the bearers and pioneers of that revolutionary tradition out of which the United States was born. (*Applause.*)

All developments in the country represent a process which has produced a very sharp struggle within the bourgeoisie. This struggle over the distribution of the reduced volume of surplus value, the struggle of tendencies and policies already assumes the proportion

of a crisis of parties in the United States. The confusion and vacillation among the bourgeoisie is gradually crystallizing into a struggle between two tendencies in policy, two political camps, representing in a general although still confused form a certain polarization of antagonistic capitalistic interests.

While the bourgeois camp is thus torn, growing million masses are beginning to separate themselves from the old political parties, moving restlessly, looking for a new road out of their difficulties, more and more becoming anti-capitalist in their moods and demands.

The crisis brought all classes into active political life. The workers and all the toiling strata of the population are more and more abandoning the traditional indifference and even hostility towards participation in politics, and more and more place their demands before the government.

The various interests, groups and leaders among the bourgeoisie are by no means passive to this stirring among the masses. Each one tries with its own particular demagogy to enlist the masses for this struggle for the particular special interests that it represents. They are all united in the common aim to prevent this rising mass movement from taking the path of active struggle against the capitalist state; they further have in common the tendency to bring forward in their demagogy and in their practical policies the characteristic features of fascism.

All of the preconditions for the rapid rise of fascism are present in the United States. This imminent and growing danger is generally underestimated even sometimes by Communists because of its specific American features in this stage, whereby it not only strives to differentiate itself from European fascism, but even raises the anti-fascist banner in the form of the slogan, "Against foreign importations of fascism and communism." The mutual recriminations of the rival bourgeois groups, which expose the fascist character of one another in their rivalry for the support of the vaguely anti-fascist masses, are too often discounted and disregarded as the usual hypocritical exaggeration of day-to-day political struggle. There is a large and growing amount of truth in these mutual recriminations of the capitalist politicians.

The fascist demagogy of the bourgeoisie has a multitude of potential victims among the masses. When a great population is suddenly thrown into the most desperate misery, the door is opened not only to the rise of a mass struggle against capitalism because of these miseries, but also to a mass mobilization on the path of fascism. To

underestimate this danger in America today is to commit a crime against the workers and toiling masses generally. What is taking place in the United States is a race between fascism and communism for the leadership of the oppressed, starving, desperate masses of the toiling population. It is upon this basis that we will further have to discuss the tasks of today of the American Communist Party, the tasks which involve problems of the mobilization and organization of millions of the population. (*Applause.*)

CACHIN (*All the delegates rise and greet him with an ovation. A voice from the Presidium: "Long live the united front!"*): Comrades, the French delegation comes to this Congress of the Communist International with a favourable balance sheet. Our Party has grown numerically and ideologically. The membership of the Party has tripled. Our Young Communist League has increased its membership fivefold within the past year. The sports organizations, to which our Party is now devoting a great deal of attention, have realized the united front with the Socialist sports organizations, and at the present time number 40,000 members. (*Applause.*)

L'Humanité, our central organ, has increased its circulation by 50,000 during the last twelve months (*applause*), and our provincial press has a circulation of more than 200,000 copies every week. (*Applause.*)

In the elections of last May and June we scored considerable victories throughout France. But here we must mention our particularly brilliant successes in the Paris region. In Paris the Communist Party tops all the other political parties. (*Applause.*) In the Paris suburbs, where, as you know, the workers forced out of the city by high rents live, we won as many seats as all the other parties taken together. (*Applause.*)

And let us not forget that the Department of the Seine, where we now hold a foremost place, has 5,000,000 inhabitants, and that it has always played a decisive role in the history of our country. To be sure, our successes in the provinces are still far behind what we have achieved in Paris and in the Paris region, but, nevertheless, our advance has been noticeable there too.

Thus, the political role of our Party has grown considerably during the past few months, and it has played a prominent part in the political life of the country. Our Party was the initiator of a very broad united front, which today has been extended into the People's

Front. And the French Lefts particularly feel that only under one condition can the progress of fascism in France be stopped, namely, by the energetic participation of the Communist Party and the revolutionary proletariat in this battle.

We can say, comrades, that there is no party in France at the present time that enjoys the confidence of the proletariat as much as the Communist Party beyond the limits of its own ranks.

Within the Party we observe a cohesion, a maturity, a flexibility and a self-possession, of which we could give you many proofs. Here is one of them:

All of you here know Doriot. You know the role played by this man ever since the formation of our Party. You know that he was in some degree a spoiled child of the Communist Party. And when he left the Party under the conditions that are known to you, he doubtlessly thought that a large part of the French Communists and of the working class would follow him. Well, not in a single one of its nuclei was the Party shaken by the desertion of this man.

Comrades, I shall cite just one example of the remarkable devotion of the proletarians to the French Communist Party.

We have set up very many Committees for the Defence of *l'Humanité*. Every Sunday, and whenever great events take place in France, we mobilize our comrades to distribute the paper. At the present time we have 15,000 men and women in Paris and the Paris region who defy the fascists and the police every Sunday, in all kinds of weather, working without any pay selling the paper in front of the subway entrances, in the markets, and in the streets.

But besides these numerous and daily acts of individual and collective devotion, our Party has furnished many proofs that it has become the leader of the masses.

Tremendous demonstrations took place in the streets of Paris after February 6 of last year, after the first fascist venture; there was a veritable state of siege, with barricades. On the night of February 9, ten of our comrades fell in battle; but the Communist Party had behind it tens of thousands of Parisians, sons of the Commune. It was the battle fought on this day, followed by the events of February 12, that repulsed the first assault of fascism in France. Thenceforth our Party has been marching at the head of the proletarian masses. It owes its mighty prestige to the loyalty it has always observed towards its International.

I must mention here the great benefits that our French proletariat has received from our affiliation to the Communist International.

The Communist International remains our leader, our guiding star; we have absolute faith in it. This is not a mystical faith; it is a faith founded on the experience of fifteen years—the years that have passed since our joining the Communist International.

At the time of the Sixth Congress the capitalist world believed itself invulnerable and invincible. Everybody shared that conviction. The bourgeois spoke of nothing but prosperity. Tardieu and Hoover proclaimed themselves its champions. The Social-Democratic Parties also declared that capitalism was firmly implanted and that it was necessary to fall in line with it. They told the proletarians: "Don't look towards Moscow, look towards Detroit; don't salute the great figure of Stalin, look at Mr. Ford's achievements." And even in this very hall there were comrades (they were soon to become ex-comrades) who told us that it would be quite wrong to consider that America was on the eve of economic and financial upheavals. But already at that time there was one voice that spoke of the cracks concealed behind that façade. It was the voice of the Communist International. It alone, in all the world, saw clearly. It unmistakably predicted the catastrophe a year before its occurrence.

Prior to the Sixth World Congress there was held the Fifteenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. I should like to remind you of the speeches of Stalin and Manuilsky at that Congress, and I ask leave to quote a concise and lucid formulation of Stalin's:

"Partial stabilization gives rise to an accentuation of the crisis of capitalism, and the growing crisis disrupts stabilization—such are the dialectics of the development of capitalism at the present historical moment."¹

This was the only correct view. A few months later, the major pillar of capitalist world economy tottered, in proud America. The event burst like a thunderbolt; and when we received the report of the crash we were reminded of the predictions of the Communist International, which alone had clearly seen ahead.

Only here, in the Communist International, is the analysis of social facts made with an unrivalled masterliness. This was always the method of the Bolsheviks—serious analysis of the economic facts that condition everything else and determine the exact rules of tac-

¹ J. Stalin, *Political Report of the Central Committee to the Fifteenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.)*.

tics; and in addition to the precise analysis—firmness and discipline in action.

This, comrades, is the secret of the success of the leaders of the Communist International; and it is because our Communist Party knows this that it is so attached to the Communist International. It was the Communist International that enabled our Party to follow the correct road in the proletarian struggle, and we are not prepared, comrades, to abandon this straight road. (*Applause.*)

The essential rule, I was going to say the golden rule, of the Communist International, the rule whose application it has always demanded of us, can be formulated very simply: Communists go to the masses! Go to the masses to win them, to line them up on your side in the daily struggles, and for the battles to come. Unfortunately, it must be said that only too often have our Parties failed to understand the urgent necessity of getting down to real, practical and positive work to realize this slogan of the Communist International. Our French Communist Party committed numerous mistakes in the course of many years. Sometimes it suffered from a mechanical "Leftism," from a penchant for abstract and unintelligible catechism formulas, owing to which it considered it beneath it to make sure, in the first place, that it was clear in its own mind, and only then to come to the proletarians and speak to them in the simple and clear language of their class interests. (*Applause.*)

I think I am justified in saying that the period of this sorry sectarian policy is happily past in our Party.

And on the other hand, it often happened that certain sections of the Party, and certain leaders slipped into the soft and easy rut of a Right policy, *i.e.*, they underestimated the depth of the crisis, they denied that the danger of war was pressing, they tended to believe in the firmness of the capitalist regime, they despised Party discipline, and slid down towards reformism.

Ever since we engaged in the struggle on two fronts, the rise of the Party has been continuous. It has ceased to be a sect; it has succeeded in finding the road to the masses. It tenaciously defends the immediate demands of the working people. In short, it has proved able to apply the masterly tactics of the Communist International, the tactics of the united front, which have been complemented by those of the People's Front. I believe that these results, this progress, are today of decisive significance.

Let me give you just two dates: first, that of the beginning, when we first became imbued with the idea of the united front

and the People's Front—after the Amsterdam Congress in August 1932. And I am glad to greet the organization formed by two men who have always given the Soviet Union tokens of their deepest sympathy, Romain Rolland and Henri Barbusse, the latter present in this hall. (*Applause.*)

Comrades, until then we had been feeling our way, but from that time on we threw ourselves into the struggle completely. That was the first step; we flung ourselves into the battle.

And here is the other date: *the 14th of July, 1935*, which witnessed the realization of the twofold tactics of the united front and the people's front on a mass scale.

Three years elapsed between these two dates, in the course of which we had to overcome serious difficulties arising, on the one hand, within the Party, which was not yet accustomed to contact with great masses, and sometimes afraid of it; and, on the other hand, having their source in the attitude of the Socialist Party leaders. As far as we were concerned, it was naturally not always easy to realize the united front. I recall that during the first united front demonstrations, when I spoke together with the Socialist leaders at great popular assemblies, there were comrades of ours who said: "Yes, the Party was well received today; but we are lending prestige to men who have compromised themselves by their policy." Comrades, there is no need for me to stress the fact that this attitude betrayed a great deal of still persisting sectarianism. Moreover, our comrades did not at once know how to approach the workers and peasants; they did not always speak to them in the clear and simple language that was necessary. They held aloof from the daily struggles of the masses and failed to adapt their own slogans to these struggles, to explain them patiently to people who often do not understand our special language, to people to whom we must learn to explain the complicated things in the great idea of communism in simple language.

I do not say that these shortcomings have been completely overcome; but nonetheless experience shows that progress is being made.

Then, there is another obstacle: the sabotage of some of the Socialist Party leaders, as in the case of Germany, of which Comrade Pieck has already spoken here in very strong terms. Our Central Committee made five official proposals for a united front to the Socialist Party since 1931, but it was only after three years, on July 15, 1934, that the higher bodies of the French Socialist Party accepted these proposals for a united front. And it must be said that they did

so under the strong pressure of the rank-and-file Socialist workers, especially in the Paris region.

The united front has been correctly functioning in France for one year now; but we still meet with deplorable reservations on the part of numerous Socialist leaders. They evince these reservations despite the successes of these tactics, and in spite of the absolute loyalty that our Party has manifested in all the joint demonstrations. Though they have nothing to reproach us with, though we, on the contrary, might have many things to say, it is not we who evince reservations, but certain Socialist leaders.

I am convinced, comrades, that these tactics of reservations on the part of the Socialist leaders regarding the united front do not reflect the desires of the Socialist workers. I am convinced that even within their own Party, these leaders will be reminded that it would be a bad thing to forget the events in Germany and Austria, and that now is not the time to loosen the united front, much less to break it; but that now is the time to strengthen it.

Going to the masses, applying the directives of the Communist International—for us French Communists that meant first of all the realization of the united front of the working class. It also meant hastening trade union unity. (*Applause.*)

Comrades, the rally of July 14 demonstrated the breadth already achieved by the People's Front, which was initiated by our Communist Party. This extension of the united front is the result of the application of the same slogan: "Communists, go to the masses." The general national and international situation imperatively dictates to us this realist policy of establishing a wide People's Front.

All the victims of capital must be united: all those whom it is already crushing under the millstone of fascism and all those whom it wants to place under the shameful yoke. When I speak to our brothers in the fascist countries, who have already suffered so much, and who are still suffering from the terror and the crimes of fascism, I am convinced that they will be the first to understand the necessity of this attitude of the French working class at a time when fascism has become such an immediate menace to us in France.

We do not want the French proletariat to come under the yoke of fascism. However, comrades, we cannot deny that at the present time fascism has become very powerful in our country. It is led by retired high officers who work together with high officers on the active list.

There is Count de la Rocque, a former nobleman, a man who

has an undeniable gift of organization—one must know one's worst enemies well. He says that he has 300,000 armed men, supplied with technical equipment, airplanes, arms and munitions. He asserts that the Croix de Feu (Fiery Cross) is still gaining members at the rate of 15,000 a month. And from time to time he mobilizes his troops for big demonstrations in the environs of Paris and in the provinces. His men feel or believe they are very close to victory. They announce it, and state that in a few weeks they will go into action. There will be "sport," they say, a scrap.

Comrades, the French working class replied magnificently to such insolence on July 14, and since that time M. Count de la Roche has perhaps begun to turn things over in his mind a bit. But we know quite well that we cannot get the best of 300,000 armed men by street demonstrations, no matter how powerful and how impressive they may be.

Comrades, although the French Hitlerites have calmed down a bit today, we know that they have the goodwill of the government and that they are preparing to take their revenge. We must work with more energy than ever before in order to frustrate the attempts of the fascists to obtain power. We have done so up to the present time, and we can do so tomorrow. But we say openly, and each of us will understand from his own experience, that we are not yet strong enough to repulse fascism by ourselves. We must have allies in the battle. These allies are precisely the People's Front. And today we are convinced that the interests of the French proletariat and of the international proletariat require that the French Communists, the French proletariat, block the way to fascism under all circumstances. For in Continental Europe today there is only one major capitalist country that is still not ruled by fascism. And if by misfortune fascism should crush us in France, it would not be we alone who would be involved; the blow would be aimed directly at the Soviet Union, for our French fascists already state that they want to wipe out the French Communists in order subsequently to do the same to the Soviet Union.

We have heard it said that this tactic of the people's front, which we have already inaugurated and which we intend to intensify by all the means at our disposal, presents a certain danger.

Comrades, it is evident that the application of every kind of tactics, no matter how correct, presents dangers, especially in a situation bristling with difficulties; but is there a more pressing duty for the French proletarians at the present time, in July 1935, than

the duty of driving back fascism, of preventing its victory by all means? In all events, when one is in a well-steered ship one can escape the rocks. It is up to the Party of the proletariat to hold the helm of the ship of the People's Front firmly in its hands.

What would the French workers say if we should hesitate to adopt the tactics demanded by the events, and if, by so doing, we should help fascism to gain power in Paris? And what would the workers of the Soviet Union say if, by pursuing a policy of sectarianism, we should procure for Hitler the support of French fascism? Do not doubt for a minute, comrades, that the day after their victory (if that ever takes place) the French fascists will join hands with Hitler, who is preparing for war against the Soviet Union. We shall not fail in our duty, and our participation in the People's Front has no other purpose than to prevent this catastrophe. Hence we shall pursue the policy of strengthening the People's Front, in order to repel fascism and, as far as we are able, to prevent war.

Together with the whole Communist International we know that we have entered the second round of revolutions and wars, but it is for that very reason, because we see the danger, that we must do the impossible to tear away from capitalism the masses whom it wants to precipitate into fascism and, simultaneously, into war. We shall do everything to line up the large masses of the people on the side of the proletariat; we shall tear them away from the influence of finance capital, which is preparing for war by way of fascism.

And if there be any who rejects this method, I ask him to show us a better one. This better method can never be that of the Second International, since after the terrible experience of 1933 in Berlin, and of 1934 in Vienna, I think no one would dare to propose that method again to the proletariat anywhere. To rally in a single front all those who, for various reasons, are opposed to war at the present time—that is our objective; and that has always been the policy of the Soviets. There can be no other policy for us. The Franco-Soviet pact is one of the steps in the struggle for peace. It is in this sense that the French workers and peasants—Communists, Socialists, democrats—have approved Stalin's clear statements to Laval. The more the French workers reflect, the more they realize that this is the only possible road, and that once again our great Comrade Stalin has fulfilled his true function as leader. (*Applause.*)

Comrades, as you can well imagine, considerable excitement reigned on the day the report of Stalin's statement was received in

France. The Socialist leaders, referring to their supposedly irreconcilable pacifist opposition to war, complained about words which, they said, would hinder them in their fight against war. And at the same time this was obviously accompanied by secret hopes that the Communist Party, which, as they said, had been dealt a heavy blow, was going to find itself considerably embarrassed.

But once again their hopes were dashed. And when a few days later we pasted up in the streets a huge poster reading: "*Stalin Is Right*," hundreds of thousands of workers of the Seine Department—Socialists, democrats, Communists—greeted the poster with shouts of "Bravo!"

Comrades, we were carrying on an election campaign at that time in the Paris suburbs, and had put up our candidates everywhere; and the Right press, and sometimes the Socialist press too, tried to hamper the activity of the Party by insinuating that Stalin's declaration had given Laval a trump card in his fight against our movement. But the working class of the Paris suburbs, with its fine sense of discernment, understood very well what that meant. Never before had we had such success in our public meetings.

I can therefore say, comrades, that Stalin's statement met with an excellent reception in our country. Not unanimous, of course. There were the fascists, to begin with; there were the neo-Socialists and the dubious little group of Trotskyites; and, finally, there was Doriot—all of whom attacked the statement.

Our Communist International is resolved to lend its initiative and support to any useful proposal that would help to preserve peace. But we have no right to be blind and deaf to the events going on around us. Of course, we count only upon the peoples to defend peace and the Soviet Union, and not upon the governments of the bourgeoisie, no matter what they may be. But it is our duty to utilize to the maximum, for the benefit of the exploited, the contradictions of the capitalist regime and the internal antagonisms that rend it apart.

We well know that it is the nature of capitalism to produce war. Let us bring together against its regime all those who hate war, no matter who they may be. We know what the union of all these wills in a people's front inspired and directed by the vanguard of the world proletariat, can achieve.

Comrades, the Soviet Union has never been more threatened by decadent imperialism than today. But at the same time we see that the Communist proletarians are not alone in the fight; that the

Socialists and many of those who are still attached to the forms of bourgeois democracy, the best intellectuals, the best artists, the greatest scientists in the world, are turning away from imperialism and are being drawn towards the fatherland of socialism.

All those who think realize that an eclipse of the Soviet Union would mean darkness over the whole world; they all realize that a world Soviet Union is the only salvation for human civilization. And that is why the working people throughout the world will rise against every attempt to attack the Soviet Union. Since the October Revolution, they have repeatedly and concretely manifested their resolution not to let the U.S.S.R. be touched. And in the stage of decisive social struggles that we now have reached everyone understands that he must devote himself to the defence of the Soviet Union without reservation, that he must identify it with his own defence. Numerous democrats, the best representatives of the intellectuals, know it as well as we do, and they have made their choice. The duty of the Communists is now tremendous; it is their task to prepare themselves to direct these coming struggles in the light of the precedent of the October Revolution in Russia. They will lead the proletariat to victory if they maintain their complete confidence in their Communist International. It has already brought salvation to one-sixth of the globe.

(Prolonged, stormy applause. All the delegates rise and sing the "Internationale.")

OKANO: The correctness of the perspective indicated in the resolutions of the Sixth World Congress of the Communist International, which pointed out that a new cycle of imperialist wars was inevitable, has been confirmed by the events of the last four years in the Far East.

On September 18, 1931, Japanese troops occupied Manchuria, one of the richest regions of China. The Japanese military clique, which is pushing ahead with its plans of subjugating the whole of China, attacked Shanghai. But the heroic resistance offered by the Chinese people forced it to retreat. After the failure of the Shanghai adventure, the Japanese Army intensified its drive against North China, seizing one province after another. Thus it seized Jehol, Chahar and other provinces of Inner Mongolia. At present, the Japanese Army has established its control over the Peiping-Tientsin area, and we witness its efforts to seize the entire northern half of the vast territory of China down to the old bed of the Yellow River (Whang Ho).

The Japanese military clique is exerting all its efforts to convert us, the workers and peasants of Japan, into a tool of war against the Soviet Union, into cannon fodder for its drive to materialize its counter-revolutionary plans of plunder. And if so far it has not succeeded in carrying out these designs, we, the Japanese workers and peasants, are indebted for this to the Soviet Union with its firm and unshakable peace policy which it pursues under the leadership of the greatest friend of the working people of all countries, Comrade Stalin.

In Japan we have a particularly clear manifestation of the close connection existing between a reactionary home policy and a predatory foreign policy. It is because of the reactionary regime inside the country, because of the fact that the working people of Japan are shackled with the chains of the military police state, that Japanese imperialism ruthlessly enslaves the colonial peoples of Asia, instigates a new world war and takes the lead among those who are organizing a counter-revolutionary war against the U.S.S.R. The role of the military fascist clique—that most reactionary, terrorist and imperialist wing of the Japanese ruling class—of finance capital and the parasitic landlords—has been growing in proportion as Japan has been pushing her policy of annexation in foreign countries.

War is the highest “ideal” of this military clique which enjoys the support of the entire reactionary gang. In an official document—a pamphlet entitled *The True Significance of the Protection of the State and an Appeal for Its Enhancement*—published by the Ministry of War in October 1934, it is openly announced that war “is the father of creation, the mother of culture, the vital energy and driving force of the life of the state,” and that unlimited armament “is an indefeasible law of the universe.” In view of the outcry that was caused by the appearance of this pamphlet, it was submitted to the Japanese government (on October 5, 1934) which—far from repudiating this pamphlet—actually endorsed its contents.

Underlying the policy of Japanese imperialism is the principle, laid down in the mentioned pamphlet, that there can be no peaceful cohabitation of peoples. As opposed to peaceful relations between peoples, the pamphlet establishes the principle of “an international struggle for existence among states.”

“The object of our meaning Japanese imperialism.—O) armed forces is to announce to the world the great principle of our Imperial morals. It is the sword that punishes evil and establishes justice,” we read in this pamphlet.

Now what are the morals and justice of Japanese imperialism? As it is quite unequivocally stated in this pamphlet, Japanese imperialism wants to win new markets, stop the development of the productive forces on Soviet territory, and establish its own rule in the Pacific.

Its morals are further expressed in the opinion that the standard of living of the workers must everywhere be kept down. We read in the pamphlet:

"Our country, with its relatively low standard of living, has great opportunities."

And these men, who see the great opportunities of the Japanese Empire in the low standard of living of its population, dare to speak in the name of the Japanese people!

By the destruction it wrought in Chapei, by the bombing of Chinese villages from the air, and by the murder of women and children, Japanese imperialism has brought shame upon the Japanese people. This is the kind of "peace and order" which Japanese imperialism brings the peoples of Asia.

But it is also exactly the same kind of "peace and order" that the government has in store for the Japanese people themselves, Count Ueda, in his capacity of Minister of Foreign Affairs, officially stated in Parliament that "in order to achieve its foreign political aims, the Japanese government will not shrink from reducing Japan to ruins." (In Japanese this is called the "Siodo" policy.) The same view is advocated by General Araki who has said that, "even if it should entail the danger of utter ruin for the fatherland, the whole of Japan must rise resolutely" to carry out his plans of imperialist expansion.

This "Siodo" policy is felt also in the entire home policy of the government. It finds expression, above all, in the financial policy of Japan's ruling classes. More than half of the Japanese state budget is consumed by war expenditures. In Japan, the proportion of military expenditures in the state budget is higher than in any other country. And this at a time when for a number of years the state budget has shown a deficit of from 30 to 35 per cent. Owing to this, the state debt has mounted rapidly from year to year, and now stands at ten billion yen. The government is forced to resort constantly to the floating of new loans. Things have been brought to such a pass that the government has been using up all the free deposits in the savings banks for war purposes.

The entire economic policy of Japan today is subordinated to the

preparations for war. Japanese bourgeois economists unanimously concede that the industrial boom which has been observed in Japan during the last few years bears the imprint of war inflation. And, indeed, the rapid rise in industrial production is entirely limited to the branches of industry that produce war materials and for export at dumping prices.

The industrial boom in Japan, which bears the marks of war inflation, is proceeding at the expense of the masses who are being plundered; it is bringing the country to the verge of financial collapse, accentuating the external and internal contradictions of Japanese capitalism, leading to new wars and driving towards a decisive clash between the classes.

The working people have been forced to bear the whole burden of the war inflation, and this has led to the complete pauperization of the Japanese working class. The industrial boom of the last few years has been accompanied by a drop in real wages of the workers (by 25 per cent as compared with the year 1931). Of the number of workers in Japanese industry who are included in the available statistical data, two-thirds receive up to one yen a day (a yen is equivalent to 30 cents), and only ten per cent receive a little more than two yen per day.

In recent years Japanese capitalists have invented an even worse system of exploitation—the system of temporary employment. This system consists in paying the rates of unskilled labourers to skilled workers who are considered as engaged for temporary employment. Most of the workers engaged for temporary work are recruited by intermediary agents who rob them of more than half their miserable wages. The workers engaged for temporary work do not enjoy even the paltry rights which the permanently employed workers have won for themselves: their working day is longer and they can be fired without notice. At the same time the profits of the armament manufacturers have more than trebled in the last few years!

In the Japanese countryside imperial morals reign no less triumphantly than they do in the cities. In modern Japan two-thirds of the peasants—the tenants and part-tenants—are in the same state of bondage as in pre-capitalist Japan, in the times of the Tokugawa.

In order to maintain all the parasites and oppressors who have saddled themselves on his neck, the Japanese peasant must surrender to them his entire income from the farm, the entire product of his labour in the field and sometimes even, over and above this, a part of his income from additional work outside the farm. Even the data

of the Imperial Agricultural Society prove that the Japanese peasant farms are run at a loss.

Indeed, the peasant who is a tenant must hand over 50 or more per cent of his entire crop to the owner of the land, and he has to pay 20 per cent of the value of his entire crop for fertilizer, without which the soil would remain unproductive. Small wonder, therefore, that the indebtedness of the peasantry is growing apace.

In those provinces of Japan in which the feudal survivals are most pronounced, as in the Northeast (Tohoku, Okinawa) actual starvation has been reigning for the last three years.

Famine is stalking a number of provinces; yet the state granaries are bursting with rice (15,000,000 koku, or one-quarter of the annual consumption of the entire country) that has been stored for the eventuality of war.

The arbitrary procedure and violence of the police are becoming more and more open and unrestrained. Not only in the remote provinces, but also in the capital cities, Tokio and Osaka, entirely innocent workers are openly, before the eyes of all, mistreated, beaten up and mangled by the police.

In Tokio, not only Communists, but also active functionaries of the trade unions (Wanibuci Kiotora) are murdered by the police; they are beaten to death in the police stations, without any formality of a preliminary court investigation. A law is being introduced which makes not only membership in the Communist Party, but also sympathizing with it, punishable by death. The police enjoy a literally unrestricted right to arrest, mistreat and torture any worker and any peasant. Japan has for a long time been a prison for the Japanese people, but in recent years even the liberties and rights that are accorded to prisoners have been abolished.

The regime of war, starvation and slavery is maintained in Japan not only by means of police terror; it also relies for support on bourgeois nationalism, on jingoism. Long before the German Nazis appeared on the scene, the ruling classes of Japan, who are trampling underfoot the human dignity and the elementary human rights of the Japanese workers, had cloaked this tyranny with propaganda about the superiority of the Japanese race. The propaganda of "Japan's divine mission" in Asia serves as one of the most effective earthly weapons for oppressing and degrading the working people of Japan. More than anything else, the jingoism and monarchism which is inculcated in the working people serves to weaken the forces of the working class and the peasantry and

to turn the workers and peasants into defenceless victims of capitalist exploitation, feudal bondage and police terror.

That is why in recent years, when the discontent of the masses has been growing daily, the various groups of the ruling classes have concentrated all their efforts on inoculating the masses with jingoism. The whole machinery of the state, the Army and the police, the press and the schools, radio and theatres, all the means at the disposal of the parliamentary parties and fascist gangs, the factory managements and the priests—everything was placed at the service of the systematic propaganda of jingoism. This jingoist propaganda activity is headed by Japanese fascism.

The central figure of Japanese fascism, its leader, is the most aggressive section of Japanese imperialism—the military clique. The entire policy of the military clique is directed towards accelerating the planned war against the Soviet Union and towards turning the present military and police dictatorship of the monarchy into an even more rabid terrorist dictatorship. Japanese fascism stresses the close relation between the two tasks—war against the Soviet Union and intensification of the regime of terror inside the country.

All the groups of the ruling classes are united in their support of the jingoist propaganda, of the policy of preparation for war and of oppressing the workers and peasants. What distinguishes fascism from the other groups of the ruling classes is that, while parading under a cloak of anti-capitalist demagogy, it is pushing jingoism, the war policy and terror to the extreme.

Within the ruling class of Japan a bitter struggle is raging between the different groups. The military fascist clique, the old and young bureaucrats, the chiefs of the Seyukai, Minseito and the Kokumin Domei fight one another for power and for the division of the spoils.

What is the political situation inside our country at present?

The leadership of the Siakai Taisuto characterizes the present situation as a period of reaction. Unquestionably, the reactionary character of the government and the terrorist suppression of the working class and peasant movement have been extremely intensified in recent years.

Reaction is on the offensive. But this is all the reactionary section of the Siakai Taisuto sees; it does not see that this offensive of the reactionary forces intensifies the discontent of the workers and peasants which is growing with each day that passes. It is true that considerable sections of the lower middle

classes have succumbed to jingoism and fascism, and the latter have even penetrated into some sections of the working class. But the main cause of this lies in the activity of the leaders of the Siakai Taisuto, in their social-chauvinism. In order to justify their desertion to the side of imperialism, the leaders of the Siakai Taisuto slander the masses of the people and maintain that the people are in favour of war.

But even in those cases when one section or another of the working class actually entertains chauvinist sentiments, these workers are the victims of the deception practised on them by the fascists and the leaders of the Siakai Taisuto—those willing lackeys of Japanese imperialism. Is it not a fact that the leaders of the Siakai Taisuto are supporting the version of Japanese imperialism, according to which the latter is allegedly fighting for peace in the East, and Japan is supposedly threatened with attack on the part of other countries? It is a generally known fact that the leaders of the Siakai Taisuto have been asserting in their propaganda that the seizure of Manchuria and Mongolia is necessary for the building of socialism in Japan and that the war against China is—as has been asserted by the President of the Sailors' Union—a war of proletarian Japan against bourgeois China.

One must be a very low lackey of imperialism in order to question the indisputable fact that the overwhelming majority of the Japanese people are anxious for peace. We consider it superfluous to prove that the working class is opposed to war. But neither is there any reason for doubting that the longing for peace is strong also among the lower middle classes. Is it to be considered just an accident that even some religious organizations of the Buddhist protestants, such as the Sinko Bukye, came out against war and fascism, and in favour of peace? Yet these organizations represent a movement of relatively backward masses of the labouring population. Even some organizations of the reactionary Niziren sect are distributing pacifist leaflets in the country.

The real attitude of the peasants may also be gleaned from the fact that the Sericulturists' Union, with a membership of nearly a million, recently petitioned the government to reduce the war budget and to use the funds thus released to assist the ruined peasantry.

The leaders of the Siakai Taisuto speak of a period of reaction, not in order to mobilize the workers for the struggle against the attacking reactionary forces, but in order to instil in the workers the idea that the working-class movement is on the decline and

to spread among the masses the feeling of impotence and hopelessness.

The leaders of the Siakai Taisuto who control the trade unions do not confine themselves to the propaganda of class collaboration; they have put forward the slogan, "As few strikes as possible," and they have even formed a special section in the Central Committee of the trade unions to exercise control over strikes. When in spite of everything, strikes do break out, they refer the conflicts for settlement to the police. Not the capitalists, but the leaders of the Siakai Taisuto themselves took the initiative of creating the Sangio Kerioku Minkai, or the Committee of Industrial Collaboration. It was also they who proposed that a Ministry of Labour and Industry be created, in order to effect the subordination of labour to capital by the state. Still, in spite of all the injunctions of the trade union leadership and in spite of the police terror, the number of strikes—far from diminishing—has even been increasing in recent years.

The most important fact that characterizes the activity of the masses and their will to struggle is the spontaneous growth of the strike movement.

Another, no less important, fact is the growth of the class consciousness of the large masses of Japanese workers. This is most clearly expressed in the growing insistence of many of the lower trade union organizations on the immediate amalgamation of the trade unions. In many cities the lower organizations—acting in the teeth of the leadership—are setting up united local committees. This is how the metal workers of Osaka, the transport workers of Tokio and a number of other trade union organizations have acted.

Similar phenomena may be observed in the countryside as well.

In some places this movement has taken the form of spontaneous demonstrations, of clashes with the police and attacks upon the village authorities.

Our Party has made great strides towards Bolshevization in the course of its struggle against the sectarian tendencies of Fukumotoism and the liquidationist trend of Yamakaism, in the course of its struggle for its correct general line and against the elements that are alien to it. We owe our successes along this line to the fact that, from the very beginning of the war which Japanese imperialism is waging against China, our Party took a genuinely Leninist internationalist stand with regard to this very difficult problem of the liberation movement of the proletariat. Our Party, acting in Bolshevik fashion, is pursuing its course against the current which is

inundating the country with the turbid wave of jingoism and social-chauvinism.

Despite the savage police terror, our Party has carried on its revolutionary agitation against the war on a large scale. During the war the Party has time and again organized anti-war demonstrations. The members of our Party are performing heroic Bolshevik work for the revolutionary enlightenment of the masses in the Army, in the Navy, in the armament factories. Our Party has succeeded in creating centres of the anti-war movement even in the countryside, among the peasants.

Our comrades have achieved a number of successes in the course of their work in reactionary organizations. In the case of one of these reactionary organizations, the local groups whose function it is to spread jingoism among the masses, arranged anti-war lectures and distributed anti-war literature.

Many organizations of the Left-radical Peasant Union, Dzankai, in which the Communists carried on intensive work, put forward anti-war slogans.

The heroic mutinies of the Japanese soldiers during the battle of Shanghai in 1932, as well as during the operations of the Imperial army in Manchuria, are still a living memory.

I think that the most valuable achievement of our Party in the period after the Sixth Congress is that we have trained Bolshevik forces.

From a small propaganda group, our Party has developed into a powerful organization. Our Party has trained numerous forces of Communist workers. It has enlisted thousands of revolutionary peasants in the peasant leagues. Our Party attracts all the honest and all the best people, not only in the working class, but also among the intellectuals.

Our organizations are frequently broken up as a result of mass arrests. The number of our arrested comrades is growing from year to year. In the beginning of 1934, Hirata, the Attorney General for Ideological Affairs, stated that the number of members and followers of our Party arrested during the period from 1928 to 1933 had reached forty thousand. Nevertheless, there is not an industrial centre, not a district in our country but there exists an organization of our Party, even if it be a small one.

Our Party has now so far developed that it must set itself as its immediate and most important task that of carrying on systematic work among the broad masses of the workers and, not as heretofore,

solely among the advanced workers. The greatest obstacle that we must overcome in this respect is the strong sectarian spirit of exclusiveness that still persists in the Party. Comrade Pieck has pointed this out in his report, and he is absolutely right. Our Party organizations are doing heroic work; but they still have to learn to utilize all the opportunities for transforming the discontent that exists in the country into actions of large masses.

The Party regards the struggle for the amalgamation of the extremely divided trade unions, for the amalgamation of the trade unions of all trends, as its main task in the sphere of establishing a united front. It is to this end that the members of our Party and all our followers must concentrate all their efforts on work inside the reformist and patriotic trade unions.

Our Party must effect a radical change in its work. But in effecting the change we must more than ever preserve the iron unity of our ranks. Under such circumstances there is an especially grave danger of sectarian and Right opportunist deviations. The communist movement in Japan faces a serious danger in the opposition faction which first made its appearance under the name of "The Conference of ... Nuclei" and subsequently came out openly as a separate faction with a separate central committee, known as the "Organization Committee for the Convocation of a Delegates' Conference," and with its own central organ.

I must openly state from this platform that neither police reprisals, nor arrests, nor the machinations of agents-provocateurs have harmed the Party so much as the splitting activity of this opposition group.

We admit that the survivals of sectarianism and the consequent behindhandedness of our Party have aroused justified dissatisfaction among many members of our Party. However, our Central Committee admitted even before the emergence of the opposition, and not in connection with it, and we admit it today, that the Party is suffering from the survivals of sectarianism and that it must effect a resolute change in its work. We have all the more right to demand that the struggle against the sectarian mistakes of the Party should be carried on in line with our Party discipline, on the basis of preserving the iron unity of the Party.

To fight for the Bolshevik unity of the Party against disintegrating factional activity, against lack of faith in the forces of the Party and of the proletariat—this is the most serious task of every member of our Party, of every class-conscious worker in Japan. There can

be no doubt but that our Party will solve this problem and that it will lead—not thousands—but millions of Japanese working people in the struggle against fascism and war, and for the victory of socialism.

Our Party will raise still higher the standard of international proletarian solidarity, and will fight still more persistently for the defence of the Soviet Union.

Our Party which has been brought up by that great champion of communism, Sen Katayama, a party which has been tried and steeled in war and frightful terror, will prove able—under the leadership of the Communist International—to solve with honour the problems facing it, and it will raise still higher the Red banner of the struggle for the liberation of the Japanese proletariat.

Long live the Communist International!

Long live the teacher and leader, the great friend of the working people of all countries, Comrade Stalin! (*Stormy applause.*)

WIEN: Comrades, two years ago I was a Social-Democratic functionary and, as such, spoke at many meetings against the Communists of Austria. Today I have the privilege of addressing this Congress of the Communist International as a Communist.

Two years ago we, the Social-Democratic functionaries who belonged to the opposition in the ranks of the Social-Democratic Party, vacillated, rent by inner contradictions. The split in the working class passed through our very being; it cut through our thinking and feeling. Today we are serene in our consciousness of power; we are filled with the steeling consciousness of our belonging to a granite-strong world party whose policy we accept without reservation. At that time the curse of half-heartedness weighed upon us; today we experience the great happiness of being undivided and thorough men standing for an undivided and thorough cause.

To the very last moment we, former Social-Democratic functionaries, tried to bring about a revolutionization of the policy of Social-Democracy. But we did not succeed, nor could we succeed, in this. We wanted to avert fascism as Social-Democrats; but no Social-Democratic Party is equal to this task. It is only a united working class under revolutionary leadership that can accomplish it.

In recent years, our only aim—the aim of thousands of Social-Democratic functionaries and tens of thousands of workers in the ranks of the Austrian Social-Democratic Party was the struggle against fascism, the struggle for a proletarian revolution. And the struggle against fascism, the struggle for a proletarian revolution,

has remained our aim. But only communism shows the way to the achievement of this aim. That is why we have become Communists. We have realized that the road we followed in the past was a wrong one, and we have drawn our conclusions from this.

What do we, former Social-Democrats, consider our main duty in the ranks of the Communist Party? We consider it our main duty to bring into the Party the masses and the numerous efficient functionaries with whom we worked together for many years. We had differences of opinion with them, but we were closely linked with them by ties of solidarity and by our common work in the movement. We do not want to give up a single fighter in the class struggle, even if we still have certain differences of opinion. We want to win over the forces who worked with great devotion to build up the old Social-Democratic Party and convert them into forces working for a proletarian revolution. Prior to February 1934, the Social-Democratic Party united us organizationally. Today, it is the proletarian united front, the relentless struggle against fascism, the passionate will for socialism that must unite us with them politically; and the prospect of our organizational unity in the ranks of a Bolshevik mass party. The past must not rise up like a wall between us.

Thousands have found their way to the Communist Party. Tens of thousands still hesitate to make a definite decision. Many of them say: "We are really Communists." Yet they cannot make up their minds to join the Communist Party. Why?

I want to speak here, in the first place, about the former Social-Democratic functionaries—about the thousands of them who have joined neither us nor the "Revolutionary Socialists." Let us not minimize the great importance of these functionaries. Let us guard against making the mistake of consciously or unconsciously repelling them. The Communist Party of Austria is carrying on a strong fight against such tendencies; it considers it of exceptional importance to enlist these functionaries. It is doubly important to draw in these functionaries and enlist them in the mass organizations under the conditions when our work has to be carried on in secrecy. It was not for nothing that the old Social-Democratic Party always extolled the nameless Party worker. He was the backbone of the Party; it was his modest and tenacious work that built up the Party; he gave everything to the Party; and he did it with love, with a fidelity that was as unostentatious as it was admirable. His life was merged with the Party; he felt himself as one with the Party, and therefore he was loyal to his party to the utmost. He

concerned himself but little with theoretical problems, and when he began to doubt in his party—as he often did—he would plunge into the everyday work with redoubled energy, so as thus to silence his doubts and—as he hoped—convert his party into a more effective instrument of the class struggle. The collapse of this Party has left the Party worker without a home. There is the danger that he may begin to look upon his life as senseless, that he may slide down into a void. Must he start again from the beginning? Must he suddenly come to regard his past as having been one big mistake?

Comrades, we must save the thousands of functionaries from these gloomy and fruitless moods. We must tell each of them: No, your life has not been senseless, your past was not just one big mistake. The political perspective of your party was wrong, false. But you worked to organize your class comrades, you brought them up in the spirit of solidarity and class consciousness, you built up immense mass organizations. Has all this work been wasted? No. Help us to defend your old mass organizations, help us to develop them further, on a new, revolutionary basis.

We can and shall win these old and experienced functionaries for the mass organizations, for the united front and for the Communist Party. And, if we approach them in the proper manner, if we arouse in them the consciousness of the continuity of the working-class movement, they will work for the Communist Party with the same love and loyalty with which they formerly worked for the Social-Democratic Party.

In a discussion one of these functionaries told me: "I consider communism to be right. But I do not want to renounce my past. There are two things that hinder me and my friends from becoming Communists: your attitude to old Social-Democracy and your dictatorship of leaders." Comrades, these are not the objections of a single individual; they are the objections of thousands of former Social-Democrats. We must discuss these objections with them seriously and in a friendly spirit.

First, as to our attitude to the old Social-Democratic Party. Shall we yield any of our principles with regard to this question, in order to win new adherents? No, we shall not do that, for in the future we would have to pay for it dearly. But neither should we resort to sophisticated or shallow formulas in dealing with this question. We shall say openly and honestly: In 1918, Social-Democracy saved capitalism, the bourgeoisie. We are not the only ones who say it; the Social-Democratic leaders themselves have repeatedly stressed

this point when they complained of the ingratitude of the bourgeoisie. They have themselves posed as the saviours of the country from Bolshevism.

The policy of Social-Democracy averted the proletarian revolution, saved the bourgeoisie and cultivated in the working class harmful reformist illusions. This is a fact. Still, it would be wrong to characterize all the leaders of Social-Democracy as traitors, or to say merely that the workers were revolutionary and only the leaders were reformists. There are many contradictory influences at work in the ranks of the working class. These contradictory influences are manifested in each worker, and Social-Democracy combined within itself all these contradictions. What was the essence of a party such as the Austrian Social-Democratic Party? What type of party did Austrian Social-Democracy represent? It tolerated practically all the contradictions, every sentiment and opinion, and tried to pay tribute to them all—to be sure, with the definite intention of avoiding and hampering every revolutionary development. It made concessions to revolutionary sentiments, but hindered the adoption of revolutionary decisions; and it did it not simply by means of imposing the will of the leaders, but by a very complicated mechanism. In decisive moments it allied itself with all petty-bourgeois elements and tendencies and thus succeeded in winning the majority of its membership over to its side and against revolution.

It is in the very nature of a Social-Democratic and opportunist party always to follow the line of least resistance and never to take the difficult road of historic necessity. Certainly, this is not an exhaustive definition, but at the moment I am only concerned with depicting the divergent tendencies at work inside Social-Democracy.

Austrian Social-Democracy combined within itself more contradictions than any other party of the Second International. Like the other parties of the Second International, Austrian Social-Democracy was characterized by its avoidance of revolutionary decisions, its lack of faith in the masses and its search for reformist solutions. But, unlike the other parties of the Second International, it had more regard for the revolutionary sentiments of its membership. It preached the principle that, up to a certain point, concessions must be made to revolutionary sentiments, so as to "intercept" them. Thus it achieved a show of "unity" of the working class and, relying for support on this "unity," it was able for many years to pursue successfully a consistent policy of reformism, primarily in the municipality of Vienna. Its achievements in the sphere of social reform

were rather significant; but by representing these achievements as a piece of socialism, it confused the working class.

However, it was not the achievements of the Vienna municipality that constituted the decisive distinguishing feature between Austrian Social-Democracy and the other parties of the Second International. The decisive distinguishing feature was the *Schutzbund*. True, the *Schutzbund* was formed for the sole purpose of defending democracy and the republic. But the fact that the Austro-Marxists did not unreservedly place their trust in the ballot box was a step that took them beyond the usual bounds of reformism. The dyed-in-the-wool reformists inside the Social-Democratic Party realized this only too well. Not for nothing did they stealthily insist for years on the dissolution of the *Schutzbund*. They saw the inner logic of genuine working-class formations, and they foresaw the consequences it might lead to.

I need not dwell here on the fact that in every crucial situation up to February 1934, the leadership of the Social-Democratic Party kept the *Schutzbund* under restraint. I only want to emphasize the inner contradictions that were rending Austrian Social-Democracy.

Unless we recognize these inner contradictions, we can have no clear understanding of the February battles. They marked the moment when the revolutionary forces—already too late for victory—gained the upper hand, and the Social-Democratic Party burst asunder. And there is another thing we must not overlook: the far-reaching toleration of Left sentiments in the Social-Democratic Party, the elastic concessions on the part of the leadership to such sentiments, had, indeed, for many years kept back Social-Democratic workers and functionaries from going over to the Communist Party; but it facilitated this process after the February events. Austrian Social-Democracy is to blame for the heavy defeat suffered by the working class; but at the same time it must be borne in mind that it kept alive the idea or, rather, the sentiment of socialism in the masses, and that it did not suppress the sympathies of the masses for the Soviet Union. This also contributed to accelerate the process of revolutionization after the February events.

This is by far not an exhaustive analysis of Austro-Marxism; I only wanted to make it clear what attitude we must assume when we argue with Social-Democratic workers and functionaries about their past.

Now, as to the question of leadership. We are against the blunt formula, "The leaders have failed." Communist leaders may also fail. This is not a decisive factor. The decisive fact is that Social-

Democracy is unable to lead the working class to victory; that only the Communist Party, even if sometimes it commits mistakes, can and will achieve victory for the working class and destroy capitalism.

Does it mean that we deny the role of leaders in the struggle of the working class? No. We do not follow the example of Social-Democracy in playing at make-believe. We know how to value properly the importance of revolutionary leaders. We must openly say so to the Social-Democratic workers and functionaries. We must ask them: Was there no leadership in the Social-Democratic Party? Of course, there was, and there is, leadership in the Social-Democratic Party. But there is an essential difference between Social-Democratic and Communist leadership. In crucial situations, the Social-Democratic leader too often takes cover behind the decisions of the Party workers; it is only on very rare occasions that he assumes full responsibility. He shifts the responsibility on to the Party workers, while in the long run he acts in accordance with his own plans and not in accordance with the desire of the masses. In moments when necessity imperatively demands prompt decision, the pros and cons are submitted for discussion to large meetings, all the doubts are brought up, and finally the doubts generally prove the stronger and prevail over historic necessity.

When fascism hypnotized the middle class masses with its principle of leadership, which is as revolting as it is effective, the following grotesque question was discussed, in the first place, in the German Social-Democratic Party: Should we not put our leaders a little more to the fore? As if "putting to the fore" and creating an artificial halo around a Party official could transform him into a working-class leader; as if it were only a matter of appearances. What do we expect of a revolutionary leader? We expect of him to embody in his person the will of the masses, to assume responsibility in crucial situations and to be able to bring the will of the masses in line with historic necessity, with the maximum of existing political possibilities. That is why Lenin was the greatest leader of the working class—Lenin who accomplished the October Revolution, concluded the Brest-Litovsk peace and introduced the N.E.P. Herein also lies the greatness of Stalin, who has carried out the building of socialism in spite of all doubters and who has firmly directed and carried out the Bolshevik policy with regard to the peasantry. In every crucial situation, Lenin and Stalin combined the will of the masses with the dictates of historic necessity. Whoever character-

izes this as the dictatorship of a leader—as some leaders of Social-Democracy do—understands neither the nature of our mass movement nor the nature of the proletarian revolution.

And how did matters stand in Germany and in Austria? At a time when all the leaders of Social-Democracy were spreading the disastrous sentiments of defeat, and when the German workers began to despair of socialism, there was one man who rose up to the occasion. To millions of Social-Democratic workers he was unknown. Millions of Social-Democratic workers had never before heard the name of the man who confronted the blood-stained fascist court in Leipzig, the man who confronted the executioners of the German people. He spoke a broken German, but he spoke fluently the international language of the proletarian revolution. (*Applause.*)

And his proud stand, the courage and wisdom of this man who faced the dirty winners of today as the victor of tomorrow, revived the spirits of the millions of workers who now realized that it is the working class that will emerge victorious, that the working class is invincible. At that moment a man emerged as leader of the international working class. That man was Georgi Dimitrov. (*Stormy applause.*) He became the leader in the consciousness of the Austrian workers as well, for he embodied the will of the millions of workers, he represented the perfect personification of the invincible and immortal proletariat.

How did matters stand in Austria? After the February events, a man who had formerly led a small party at one stroke became the leader of the Austrian working class. That man was our Comrade Koplenig. (*Loud applause.*) And why did he become a leader, our leader? Because in those weeks after the defeat he embodied the will of the masses, their will to struggle, their will for unity, their will to defend and maintain our mass organizations; because he dispelled any doubts we may have had as to the sincere will for unity of the Communist Party; because we all saw in him the representative, not of the small party of yesterday but of tomorrow's mass party.

We see in the leaders of our Party, in the leaders of the working class, not only individual personalities, but the embodiment of everything that we hold dear: the embodiment of the mass and the idea, of the proletariat and of socialism.

That is what we shall say to the former Social-Democrats; that is how we shall speak to them—candidly and sincerely.

And there is something else we must tell them. We have come

from the Social-Democratic Party, from the Second International. In recent years we felt ever more distinctly the deterioration, the precariousness and the disintegration of this International, and this feeling rendered our efforts half-hearted. We were connected with a central power house that supplied us with but a weak current; for the water that fed it was drained into many side-channels. Today, comrades, we are charged with a high-tension current, with the mighty accumulated power of a single mass will, of a monolithic International. Before, we had the premonition of defeat; today we have the certainty of victory. Today we are grateful and proud in our knowledge of what it means to be no longer men of the Second International, but to be men of the Third International, of Lenin's International—the International of victory and revolution! (*Loud and prolonged applause.*)

FOURTEENTH SITTING

(August 1, 1935)

Opening: 6:30 p.m.

Presiding: Florin

FLORIN: Comrade Pieck has the floor to reply to the discussion.
(*Prolonged applause.*)

COMRADE PIECK'S REPLY TO THE DISCUSSION

PIECK: Comrades, the discussion on the report of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, which lasted six days, and in which sixty speakers representing forty-six countries took part, showed what a tremendous distance has been traversed in the development of the Communist International, the vanguard of the world proletariat, since the Sixth World Congress. In all countries the Communist Parties have grown stronger and have placed themselves at the head of big mass movements of the working people. While at the time of the Sixth World Congress a factional struggle was still being waged within a number of the Sections, today the Communist International and its Sections are homogeneous, steadfast and united as never before. The discussion bore eloquent testimony to the ideological and political steadfastness of all our Sections and to the increase of their influence among the masses. (*Stormy applause.*)

The report of the Executive Committee has met with the full approval of the speakers from all the Communist Parties. Everything described by the comrades who took part in the discussion regarding the experiences gained in their struggles completely corroborates the *correctness of the Bolshevik line of the Communist International, its*

analysis of international development, and the prospects of international development it outlined.

The creation of a proletarian united front and of a People's Front of all the working people for the fight against the capitalist offensive, fascism and war has been made the chief task by all the Sections, and a number of Sections have already been able to register certain successes in the fulfilment of this most important task. But we regret to say that the speakers in the discussion did not sufficiently define their attitude to the international experience described in the report, but for the most part confined themselves to dealing with the events in their own countries and the experience gained there.

In the report of the Executive Committee of the Communist International the work and the mistakes of our various Parties were earnestly criticized. It is true that most of the comrades who took part in the discussion admitted the justness of this criticism; but not all of them by far dealt with the conclusions that must be drawn if their work is to be improved. We hope that the comrades will repair this defect in the discussion on the second point of the agenda, which will deal with the problems of the united front.

It must also be noted that the speeches of certain of the speakers revealed a spirit of self-satisfaction with the successes achieved, and it was not sufficiently explained why, in spite of the favourable conditions, our influence among the masses was not more firmly established.

Comrade Cachin spoke of the great work performed by the French Communist Party in the fight for a united front of the proletariat and for a People's Front of all the working people against fascism. The tactics of the French comrades have been justified, and the Party has achieved big political successes, but these successes still need to be consolidated. The fascist danger in France is extremely great, and we are therefore entitled to demand further successes of the French comrades in the fight against fascism, on the basis of the right line which the Party has taken, and which sets an example for the whole Communist International.

In France we are on the eve of tremendous struggles. Two camps are mobilizing for these struggles, and the victory or defeat of the People's Front will be of tremendous import for the whole international working-class movement and for the entire world situation.

The work of our French Party, which has succeeded in arousing and organizing among the broadest sections of the French people the will to resist fascist barbarism, must serve as an example for all our Parties.

The representative of the Communist Party of Spain, Comrade Garcia, gave us a vivid picture of the great October fighting and of the efforts made by the Party to establish a united front of the proletariat. Yet the Communist Party of Spain is still suffering from political weaknesses. After the armed fighting in October 1934 our comrades in Spain, unlike the Communist Party of Austria, were not able to enlighten the masses as to the mistakes of the Social-Democratic leaders and to induce large numbers of Social-Democrats to turn towards communism. The fight in Spain is not over. The Party must now develop still greater initiative in organizing the masses and must make still greater efforts to establish a united front with the Socialist and Anarchist workers in order to prepare itself for the impending political struggles. We are absolutely certain that the Spanish comrades, who are on the right road, will be able not only to correct the errors in their work, but also to achieve further and greater successes.

Comrade Furini, in the name of the Italian delegation, expressed his complete agreement with my statement that a change of spirit had set in among the Italian workers. But this in itself is not enough. The work of the Italian Communist Party in the fascist organizations is still weak. But unless it works seriously in these organizations it will not establish contact with the wide masses. The survivals of sectarian ideas must be eliminated if the work in the fascist mass organizations is to be better developed. This is all the more necessary because the situation arising in connection with the impending war with Abyssinia demands that the Party become the real leader of the broad working-class masses.

The three comrades from the Chinese Party who spoke here at the Congress gave us a picture of the fighting going on in China and showed us how the Chinese Party is organizing, under very difficult circumstances, the fight against native and foreign oppressors. Their speeches gave us an idea of the great road the Communist Party of China has traversed in the interval between the Sixth and Seventh Congresses, a road that fills the hearts of the Communists of all the world with pride and joy. (*Warm applause.*)

The Communist Party of China sets an example for all Communists of the colonies and dependent countries. But apart from the Communist Party of China, the Communist Parties of a number of colonial countries have in the interval between the Sixth and Seventh Congresses also stood at the head of large mass movements which, however, were defeated by the imperialists. The Parties of these countries must now rally their forces for a new struggle.

A number of other Parties in colonial countries, parties that are as yet insignificant vanguard groups, must now concentrate their attention on awakening the revolutionary consciousness of the working-class masses and creating cadres of revolutionaries by organizing the struggle for day-to-day demands, however small. The sectarianism which is still prevalent in the Sections in these countries must be eradicated root and branch.

All the comrades who took part in the discussion acknowledged the necessity of working in all the mass organizations of the working people. We have already heard such acknowledgments of the necessity for mass work at Plenums of the E.C.C.I.; nevertheless, this work has progressed very slowly. This can only be explained by the fact that the Communists prefer to work only in revolutionary organizations and consider the small, day-to-day work in the mass organizations created by the reformist, bourgeois-democratic and fascist parties to be of secondary importance, not very significant, or even not befitting a Communist. We must very definitely put an end to such views and ideas.

The report of the E.C.C.I. drew attention to the existence of a number of serious shortcomings not only in the work of the individual Sections but also in the work of the Executive Committee of the Communist International. The Executive Committee of the Communist International considers an improvement in its work most essential and important. A number of Sections have submitted proposals designed to improve the work of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, some of which I have already mentioned in my report. The draft resolution drawn up on the basis of the proposals of the delegations will submit these proposals for your approval.

There have been a number of defects in the work of the Executive Committee. It is not, of course, of serious importance if in certain cases the Executive Committee did not punctually answer some letter or other not dealing with any fundamental political question of our movement. It is very possible that such cases have occurred and that the complaints of Comrade Mueller of the Communist Party of Luxemburg in this connection are fully justified. But far more important are those cases when the Executive Committee delayed in coming to the support of a Section on important political questions. Comrade Campbell, the representative of the Communist Party of Great Britain, particularly dealt in the discussion with these general political defects in the work of the Executive Committee. We want explicitly to state that we entirely welcome Comrade Campbell's criticism. But the

criticism does not quite hit the mark. If I dwell on this criticism in some detail, it is only with the purpose of giving more prominence to the questions which Comrade Campbell has raised.

The Executive Committee bears the responsibility for all our shortcomings equally with the Sections. But in its efforts to strengthen and improve the work, the Executive Committee of the Communist International can rely only on the Sections themselves. We have expressly mentioned the serious defect that the Executive Committee was not sufficiently supported in its work by the Sections. The errors and shortcomings in our work can be eliminated only if the best representatives of the Sections permanently participate in the work of the Executive Committee and if the Sections themselves submit the respective problems to the Executive Committee.

Comrade Campbell dealt in particular detail with *trade union work* and the sectarian attitude that was revealed in this work. He asked whether it is right for the whole responsibility for the sectarian mistakes committed in strike strategy and strike tactics to be laid on the individual Parties and whether the Executive Committee took the initiative in proper time in combating the tendency to renounce work in the reformist trade unions.

The sectarian mistakes manifested in trade union work were expressly condemned in the report of the Executive Committee, in which appropriate passages were quoted from the Strassburg resolution. But Comrade Campbell in his criticism did not pay sufficient heed to the fact that the Tenth, Eleventh and Twelfth Plenums of the Executive Committee of the Communist International expressed their objections to the sectarian tendencies on the trade union question contained in the Strassburg resolution. I am therefore obliged to quote a little.

In the resolution of the Tenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. it is explicitly stated that Communists "must in no case call upon the workers to quit the reformist trade unions." As regards work in the reformist trade unions, it is stated that "on the contrary, this work must be intensified." Furthermore, the Tenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. expressed itself as quite definitely opposed to the "dangerous tendency to *dispense* with work in the reformist trade unions," and to any "revision of the decisions regarding work in the reformist trade unions." In this decision of the Tenth Plenum of the E.C.C.I., the following sentence is quoted from Lenin's "*Left-Wing*" *Communism*:

"In order to be able to help 'the masses' and to win the sympathy, confidence and the support of 'the masses,' it is necessary

to brave all difficulties and to be unafraid of the punpricks, obstacles, insults and persecution of the 'leaders' . . . and it is imperatively necessary *to work wherever the masses are to be found.*"

In its resolution, the Eleventh Plenum of the E.C.C.I. declared that a major weakness in the work of most of the Sections lies

"in the opportunist or sectarian underestimation and the neglect of the exceptionally important work in the reformist trade unions."

The Twelfth Plenum of the E.C.C.I. also took a sharp stand against anti-trade union tendencies. I quote merely the following passage from the resolution:

"One of the chief causes of the insufficient mobilization of the masses by the Communist Parties and the revolutionary trade union organizations in the struggle against the capitalist offensive is the impermissibly weak work carried on *inside the reformist trade unions*. . . . The influence of the reformist trade union bureaucracy . . . cannot be broken down by shouts about wrecking the trade unions, for which Communists are not striving, nor by deserting the trade unions, but by persistent work inside the reformist trade unions, by fighting hard to win over every member of the reformist unions, for every *elected post* in the trade unions."

I therefore think there is no ground for reproaching the Executive Committee with not having taken the initiative in combating sectarian tendencies in trade union work.

Nevertheless, it is possible that the Executive Committee in certain cases actually did not take up the cudgels promptly and with the necessary vigour against sectarian tendencies manifested in the Party, and particularly in trade union work.

Also, in correcting the resolutions of the Strassburg Conference the Executive Committee was guilty of a certain delay in not immediately changing the formulations which were erroneous, which occasioned great distortions in the work of the Sections and no longer corresponded with the changed situation.

Comrade Campbell complained that the Strassburg resolution, as he states, was "forced" on the Communist Party of Great Britain as perfectly correct in all its details and formulations. But the Executive Committee has always given heed to the peculiar conditions prevailing in Great Britain and has drawn the special attention of our British comrades to the fact that in their work the deeply ingrained trade union traditions in Great Britain must be taken into account

and that particular emphasis must be laid on work in the trade unions and on maintaining the closest contact with the workers organized in the trade unions. If Right errors were committed in the work of the Communist Party of Great Britain and the Communist International had to criticize these errors, this must not be interpreted as countenancing sectarian mistakes.

Now as to the *youth question*. Comrade Browder of the American delegation complained that the youth question was dealt with too briefly in the report of the Executive Committee. He is right. We should have dealt much more fully in the report with the big defects in the work of our Sections in the matter of winning over the masses of the working youth and in supporting our Young Communist Leagues.

Winning over the masses of the working youth is a most important task, especially in the fight against fascism and imperialist war. Our Sections in the countries in which legal and illegal conditions of work prevail must devote the greatest attention to winning over the youth and must adopt practical measures which, taking into account the desire of young people to take an active part in sports, culture and politics, are calculated to draw the youth into the united front and to prevent their falling victims to fascist demagogy.

Comrade Furini of the Italian delegation cast very serious reproaches at the Executive Committee of the Young Communist International. He accused the Executive Committee of the Young Communist International of having taken a sectarian attitude, and of having proved incapable of leading the Young Communist Leagues properly. This assertion is undoubtedly exaggerated. But the fact remains that the Young Communist International for a long time did suffer from marked sectarian tendencies which prevented the creation of a youth movement of a real mass character. The situation in the Young Communist International has distinctly improved during the past few years. Nevertheless, the youth movement still does not bear a mass character and still displays strong elements of sectarianism.

Of course, the Y.C.I. bears a high degree of responsibility for the weakness of the work among the youth. But we, the Executive Committee of the Communist International, we, the Communist Parties, bear with the Y.C.I. full responsibility for winning the working youth for the revolutionary struggle. The Sections of the Communist International must regard the youth movement as one of the most important sectors of their work and must fight to win the masses of the working youth for the united front and to train them for the revolutionary struggle.

It is the duty of the Executive Committee to devote itself mainly to the work of defining the fundamental political and tactical positions of the international working-class movement, and more than was formerly the case refrain from intervening in the internal organizational affairs of the Sections. Unlike the Second International, we are a world Party with an iron discipline.

The Executive Committee will, of course, continue to intervene if the work of our Sections betrays serious defects. But, I repeat, the main emphasis must be laid on the work of defining the fundamental political and tactical positions of the international working-class movement.

Comrades, we are entering the period in which the split in the ranks of the working class will be healed, and we are creating in the working class the forces that will be capable of overthrowing capitalism and establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The road we are taking is that of the creation of a proletarian united front, the creation of trade union unity, the creation of a People's Front of all the working people, the creation of a united revolutionary party of the proletariat on the tried theoretical and organizational foundations of the teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin.

We, the Communists, are the initiators and organizers of the broadest fighting front of the workers for peace, freedom and bread and against the front of the exploiters and oppressors.

The creation of such a front is no easy task. We Communists must know how to make ourselves understood by the masses and to speak to them in their own language, to fire the masses and to lead them.

We must learn to lead in a common fight millions of people, holding different views, convictions and outlooks. We must therefore so adapt the style and methods of our work as to achieve the maximum contact with these masses in the shortest possible time.

We Communists must know how to utilize every change in the policy of the bourgeoisie in each country, every antagonism within the ruling classes, in order to repulse reaction, fascism, the war danger and the capitalist offensive.

The workers and peasants of the Soviet Union, led by the Party of Lenin and Stalin, have shown the way to the workers of the whole world.

The victory of socialism, in the Soviet Union endows us, the Communists, and the masses with the strength to follow this example.

The bourgeoisie is driving the world towards fascism and war in order to escape being encircled by the revolutionary front of the work-

ing people. It will depend on us, the Communists, it will depend on the working class whether the bourgeoisie succeeds in this or not.

Never has the responsibility of the Communist Parties been so great and serious as it is today.

Our slogan in the fight to win over the majority of the proletariat is—*Widen the front! Penetrate deeper into the mass organizations.*

Our task within the Communist Parties is—*Strengthen the Parties and raise the political level of our Party organizations.*

Comrades, let us fight for the accomplishment of our great historical task, namely, *to win emancipation, welfare and happiness for the whole of toiling humanity!* (Loud and prolonged applause, all rise. The "Internationale" is sung.)

KUUSINEN: A meeting of the representatives of the leading Sections has drawn up a draft resolution on the report of the E.C.C.I. This draft has been discussed by the various delegations. A number of amendments submitted by several delegations have been accepted. I propose that the resolution be adopted with the amendments.

(The resolution on Comrade Pieck's report is adopted unanimously.¹)

¹ See page 565.

FIFTEENTH AND SIXTEENTH SITTINGS

(August 2, 1935)

THE FASCIST OFFENSIVE AND THE TASKS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

Opening: 11 a.m.; sitting resumed at 6 p.m.

Presiding: Kuusinen

KUUSINEN: We now come to the second point on our agenda: The fascist offensive and the tasks of the Communist International in the fight for the unity of the working class against fascism.

Comrade Dimitrov has the floor. *(Comrade Dimitrov is greeted by stormy applause as he mounts the rostrum. The delegates rise and greet the speaker with an enthusiastic ovation. Greetings are shouted in many languages; cries of "Rot Front!" "Hurrah!" "Banzai!" Resounding shouts of "Long live Dimitrov!" and "Hail Dimitrov, the courageous revolutionary fighter!" fill the hall. Repeated cheers and prolonged applause. All sing the "Internationale.")*

Report by Comrade Dimitrov

THE FASCIST OFFENSIVE AND THE TASKS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL IN THE FIGHT FOR THE UNITY OF THE WORKING CLASS AGAINST FASCISM

1. FASCISM AND THE WORKING CLASS

DIMITROV: Comrades, as early as the Sixth Congress the Communist International warned the world proletariat that a new fascist offensive was under way and called for a struggle against it. The Congress pointed out that "in a more or less developed form, fascist ten-

dencies and the germs of a fascist movement are to be found almost everywhere."

With the development of the very deep economic crisis, with the general crisis of capitalism becoming sharply accentuated and the mass of working people becoming revolutionized, fascism has embarked upon a wide offensive. The ruling bourgeoisie more and more seeks salvation in fascism, with the object of taking exceptional predatory measures against the working people, preparing for an imperialist war of plunder, attacking the Soviet Union, enslaving and partitioning China, and by all these means preventing revolution.

The imperialist circles are trying to shift the *whole* burden of the crisis onto the shoulders of the working people. *That is why they need fascism.*

They are trying to solve the problem of markets by enslaving the weak nations, by intensifying colonial oppression and repartitioning the world anew by means of war. *That is why they need fascism.*

They are striving to *forestall* the growth of the forces of revolution by smashing the revolutionary movement of the workers and peasants and by undertaking a military attack against the Soviet Union—the bulwark of the world proletariat. *That is why they need fascism.*

In a number of countries, Germany in particular, these imperialist circles have succeeded, *before* the masses had decisively turned toward revolution, in inflicting defeat on the proletariat and establishing a fascist dictatorship.

But it is characteristic of the victory of fascism that this victory, on the one hand, bears witness to the weakness of the proletariat, disorganized and paralyzed by the disruptive policy of Social-Democracy, by its class collaboration with the bourgeoisie, and, on the other, expresses the weakness of the bourgeoisie itself, afraid of the realization of a united struggle of the working class, afraid of revolution, and no longer in a position to maintain its dictatorship over the masses by the old methods of bourgeois democracy and parliamentarism.

The victory of fascism in Germany, Comrade Stalin said at the Seventeenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union,

"... must be regarded not only as a symptom of the weakness of the working class and as a result of the betrayal of the working class by Social-Democracy, which paved the way for fascism; it must also be regarded as a symptom of the weakness of the bourgeoisie, as a symptom of the fact that the bourgeoisie is already unable to rule by the old methods of parliamentarism and bourgeois

democracy, and, as a consequence, is compelled in its home policy to resort to terroristic methods of administration—it must be taken as a symptom of the fact that it is no longer able to find a way out of the present situation on the basis of a peaceful foreign policy, and, as a consequence, it is compelled to resort to a policy of war”¹.

The Class Character of Fascism

Comrades, fascism in power was correctly described by the Thirteenth Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International as *the open terrorist dictatorship of the most reactionary, most chauvinistic and most imperialist elements of finance capital*.

The most reactionary variety of fascism is the *German type* of fascism. It has the effrontery to call itself National-Socialism, though it has nothing in common with socialism. Hitler fascism is not only bourgeois nationalism, it is bestial chauvinism. It is a government system of political gangsterism, a system of provocation and torture practised upon the working class and the revolutionary elements of the peasantry, the petty bourgeoisie and the intelligentsia. It is mediæval barbarity and bestiality, it is unbridled aggression in relation to other nations.

German fascism is acting as *the spearhead of international counter-revolution, as the chief instigator of imperialist war, as the initiator of a crusade against the Soviet Union, the great fatherland of the working people of the whole world*.

Fascism is not a form of state power “standing above both classes—the proletariat and the bourgeoisie,” as Otto Bauer, for instance, has asserted. It is not “the revolt of the petty bourgeoisie which has captured the machinery of the state,” as the British Socialist Brailsford declares. No, fascism is not a power standing above class, nor a power of the petty bourgeoisie or the lumpenproletariat over finance capital. Fascism is the power of finance capital itself. It is the organization of terrorist vengeance against the working class and the revolutionary section of the peasantry and intelligentsia. In foreign policy, fascism is jingoism in its most brutal form, fomenting bestial hatred of other nations.

This, the true character of fascism, must be particularly stressed; because in a number of countries, under cover of social demagogy,

¹ J. Stalin, *Report to the Seventeenth Congress of the C.P.S.U. (B.) on the Work of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U. (B.)*

fascism has managed to gain the following of the mass of the petty bourgeoisie that has been driven out of its course by the crisis, and even of certain sections of the most backward strata of the proletariat. These would never have supported fascism if they had understood its real class character and its true nature.

The development of fascism, and the fascist dictatorship itself, assume *different forms* in different countries, according to historical, social and economic conditions and to the national peculiarities and the international position of the given country. In certain countries, principally those in which fascism has no extensive mass basis and in which the struggle of the various groups within the camp of the fascist bourgeoisie itself is rather acute, fascism does not immediately venture to abolish parliament, but allows the other bourgeois parties, as well as the Social-Democratic Parties, to retain a certain degree of legality. In other countries, where the ruling bourgeoisie fears an *early* outbreak of revolution, fascism establishes its unrestricted political monopoly, either immediately or by intensifying its reign of terror against and persecution of all competing parties and groups. This does not prevent fascism, when its position becomes *particularly* acute, from trying to extend its basis and, without altering its class nature, trying to *combine* open terrorist dictatorship with a crude sham of parliamentarism.

The accession to power of fascism is not an *ordinary succession* of one bourgeois government by another, but a *substitution* of one state form of class domination of the bourgeoisie—bourgeois democracy—by another form—open terrorist dictatorship. It would be a serious mistake to ignore this distinction, a mistake which would prevent the revolutionary proletariat from mobilizing the widest strata of the working people of town and country for the struggle against the menace of the seizure of power by the fascists, and from taking advantage of the contradictions which exist in the camp of the bourgeoisie itself. But it is a mistake, no less serious and dangerous, to *underrate* the importance, for the establishment of fascist dictatorship, of the *reactionary measures of the bourgeoisie which are at present increasingly developing in bourgeois-democratic countries*—measures which suppress the democratic liberties of the working people, falsify and curtail the rights of parliament and intensify the repression of the revolutionary movement.

Comrades, the accession to power of fascism must not be conceived of in so simplified and smooth a form, as though some committee or other of finance capital decided on a certain date to set up a fascist dictatorship. In reality, fascism usually comes to power in the course of a mutual, and at times severe, struggle against the old bourgeois

parties, or a definite section of these parties, in the course of a struggle even within the fascist camp itself—a struggle which at times leads to armed clashes, as we have witnessed in the case of Germany, Austria and other countries. All this, however, does not make less important the fact that, before the establishment of a fascist dictatorship, bourgeois governments usually pass through a number of preliminary stages and adopt a number of reactionary measures which directly facilitate the accession to power of fascism. Whoever does not fight the reactionary measures of the bourgeoisie and the growth of fascism at these preparatory stages *is not in a position to prevent the victory of fascism, but, on the contrary, facilitates that victory.*

The Social-Democratic leaders glossed over and concealed from the masses the true class nature of fascism, and did not call them to the struggle against the increasingly reactionary measures of the bourgeoisie. They bear great *historical responsibility* for the fact that, at the decisive moment of the fascist offensive, a large section of the working people of Germany and of a number of other fascist countries failed to recognize in fascism bloodthirsty, rapacious finance capital, their most vicious enemy, and that these masses were not prepared to resist it.

What is the source of the influence of fascism over the masses? Fascism is able to attract the masses because it demagogically appeals to their *most urgent needs and demands*. Fascism not only inflames prejudices that are deeply ingrained in the masses, but also plays on the better sentiments of the masses, on their sense of justice, and sometimes even on their revolutionary traditions. Why do the German fascists, those lackeys of the big bourgeoisie and mortal enemies of socialism, represent themselves to the masses as “Socialists,” and depict their accession to power as a “revolution”? Because they try to exploit the faith in revolution and the urge toward socialism that lives in the hearts of the mass of working people in Germany.

Fascism acts in the interests of the extreme imperialists, but it presents itself to the masses in the guise of champion of an ill-treated nation, and appeals to outraged national sentiments, as German fascism did, for instance, when it won the support of the masses of the petty bourgeoisie by the slogan “Against the Versailles Treaty!”

Fascism aims at the most unbridled exploitation of the masses, but it approaches them with the most artful anti-capitalist demagoguery, taking advantage of the deep hatred of the working people against the plundering bourgeoisie, the banks, trusts and financial magnates, and advancing those slogans which at the given moment are most alluring to the politically immature masses. In Germany—“The general welfare is

higher than the welfare of the individual"; in Italy—"Our state is not a capitalist, but a corporate state"; in Japan—"For Japan without exploitation"; in the United States—"Share the wealth," and so forth.

Fascism places the people at the mercy of the most corrupt and venal elements, but comes before them with the demand for "an honest and incorruptible government." Speculating on the profound disillusionment of the masses in bourgeois-democratic governments, fascism hypocritically denounces corruption (for instance, the Barmat and Sklarek affairs in Germany, the Stavisky affair in France, and numerous others).

It is in the interests of the most reactionary circles of the bourgeoisie that fascism intercepts the disappointed masses who desert the old bourgeois parties. But it impresses these masses by the *severity of its attacks* on the bourgeois governments and its irreconcilable attitude to the old bourgeois parties.

Surpassing in its cynicism and hypocrisy all other varieties of bourgeois reaction, fascism *adapts* its demagogy to the *national peculiarities* of each country, and even to the peculiarities of the various social strata in one and the same country. And the mass of the petty bourgeoisie and even a section of the workers, reduced to despair by want, unemployment and the insecurity of their existence, fall victim to the social and chauvinist demagogy of fascism.

Fascism comes to power as a *party of attack* on the revolutionary movement of the proletariat, on the mass of the people who are in a state of unrest; yet it stages its accession to power as a "revolutionary" movement against the bourgeoisie on behalf of "the whole nation" and for the "salvation" of the nation. One recalls Mussolini's "march" on Rome, Pilsudski's "march" on Warsaw, Hitler's National-Socialist "revolution" in Germany, and so forth.)

But whatever the masks which fascism adopts, whatever the forms in which it presents itself, whatever the ways by which it comes to power—

Fascism is a most ferocious attack by capital on the mass of the working people;

Fascism is unbridled chauvinism and predatory war;

Fascism is rabid reaction and counter-revolution;

Fascism is the most vicious enemy of the working class and of all working people!

What Are the Fruits of the Victory of Fascism for the Masses?

Fascism promised the workers "a fair wage," but actually it has brought them an even lower, a pauper standard of living. It promised work for the unemployed, but actually it has brought them even more painful torments of starvation and forced servile labour. In practice it converts the workers and unemployed into pariahs of capitalist society stripped of rights; destroys their trade unions; deprives them of the right to strike and to have their working-class press, forces them into fascist organizations, plunders their social insurance funds and transforms the mills and factories into barracks where the unbridled arbitrary rule of the capitalist reigns.

Fascism promised the working *youth* a broad highway to a brilliant future. But actually it has brought wholesale dismissals of young workers, labour camps and incessant military drilling for a predatory war.

Fascism promised to guarantee *office workers, petty officials and intellectuals* security of existence, to destroy the omnipotence of the trusts and wipe out profiteering by bank capital. But actually it has brought them an ever greater degree of despair and uncertainty as to the morrow; it is subjecting them to a new bureaucracy made up of the most submissive of its followers, it is setting up an intolerable dictatorship of the trusts and spreading corruption and degeneration to an unprecedented extent.

Fascism promised the ruined and impoverished *peasants* to put an end to debt bondage, to abolish rent and even to expropriate the landed estates without compensation, in the interests of the landless and ruined peasants. But actually it is placing the labouring peasants in a state of unprecedented servitude to the trusts and the fascist state apparatus, and pushes to the utmost limit the exploitation of the great mass of the peasantry by the big landowners, the banks and the usurers.

"Germany will be a peasant country, or will not be at all," Hitler solemnly declared. And what did the peasants of Germany get under Hitler? The moratorium, which has already been cancelled? Or the law on the inheritance of peasant property, which leads to millions of sons and daughters of peasants being squeezed out of the villages and reduced to paupers? Farm labourers have been transformed into semi-serfs, deprived even of the elementary right of free movement. The working peasants have been deprived of the opportunity of selling the produce of their farms in the market.

And in Poland?

"The Polish peasant," says the Polish newspaper *Czas*, "employs methods and means which were used perhaps only in the Middle Ages; he nurses the fire in his stove and lends it to his neighbour; he splits matches into several parts; he lends dirty soap-water to others; he boils herring barrels in order to obtain salt water. This is not a fable, but the actual state of affairs in the countryside, of the truth of which anybody may convince himself."

And it is not Communists who write this, comrades, but a Polish reactionary newspaper!

But this is by no means all.

Every day, in the concentration camps of fascist Germany, in the cellars of the Gestapo (German secret police), in the torture chambers of Poland, in the cells of the Bulgarian and Finnish secret police, in the "Glavnyacha" in Belgrade, in the Rumanian "Siguranza" and on the Italian islands, the best sons of the working class, revolutionary peasants, fighters for the splendid future of mankind, are being subjected to revolting tortures and indignities, before which pale the most abominable acts of the tsarist secret police. The blackguardly German fascists beat husbands to a bloody pulp in the presence of their wives, and send the ashes of murdered sons by parcel post to their mothers. Sterilization has been made a method of political warfare. In the torture chambers, imprisoned anti-fascists are given injections of poison, their arms are broken, their eyes gouged out; they are strung up and have water pumped into them; the fascist swastika is carved in their living flesh.

I have before me a statistical summary drawn up by the International Red Aid regarding the number of killed, wounded, arrested, maimed and tortured to death in Germany, Poland, Italy, Austria, Bulgaria and Yugoslavia. In Germany alone, since the National-Socialists came to power, over 4,200 anti-fascist workers, peasants, employees, intellectuals—Communists, Social-Democrats and members of opposition Christian organizations—have been murdered, 317,800 arrested, 218,600 injured and subjected to torture. In Austria, since the battles of February last year, the "Christian" fascist government has murdered 1,900 revolutionary workers, maimed and injured 10,000 and arrested 40,000. And this summary, comrades, is far from complete.

Words fail me in describing the indignation which seizes us at the thought of the torments which the working people are now undergoing in a number of fascist countries. The facts and figures we quote *do not reflect one hundredth part of the true picture of the exploitation*

and tortures inflicted by the White terror and forming part of the daily life of the working class in many capitalist countries. Volumes cannot give a just picture of the countless brutalities inflicted by fascism on the working people.

With feelings of profound emotion and hatred for the fascist butchers, we dip the banners of the Communist International before the unforgettable memory of John Scheer, Fiete Schulze and Luetgens in Germany, Koloman Wallisch and Muenichreiter in Austria, Sallai and Fuerst in Hungary, Kofardzhiev, Lutibrodsky and Voikov in Bulgaria—before the memory of thousands and thousands of Communists, Social-Democrats and no-party workers, peasants and representatives of the progressive intelligentsia who have laid down their lives in the struggle against fascism.

From this platform we greet the leader of the German proletariat and the honorary chairman of our Congress—Comrade Thaelmann. (*Loud applause; all rise.*) We greet Comrades Rakosi, Gramsci (*loud applause; all rise*), Antikainen and Yonko Panov. We greet the leader of the Spanish Socialists, Caballero, imprisoned by the counter-revolutionaries; Tom Mooney, who has been languishing in prison for eighteen years, and the thousands of other prisoners of capitalism and fascism (*loud applause*), and we say to them: “Brothers in the fight, brothers in arms, you are not forgotten. We are with you. We shall give every hour of our lives, every drop of our blood, for your liberation, and for the liberation of all working people from the shameful regime of fascism.” (*Loud applause; all rise.*)

Comrades, it was Lenin who warned us that the bourgeoisie may succeed in overwhelming the working people by savage terror, in checking the growing forces of revolution for brief periods of time, but that, nevertheless, this would not save it from its doom.

“Life will assert itself,” Lenin wrote. “Let the bourgeoisie rave, work itself into a frenzy, overdo things, commit stupidities, take vengeance on the Bolsheviks in advance and endeavour to kill off (in India, Hungary, Germany, etc.) hundreds, thousands and hundreds of thousands more of yesterday’s and tomorrow’s Bolsheviks. Acting thus, the bourgeoisie acts as all classes doomed by history have acted. Communists should know that the future, at any rate, belongs to them; therefore, we can, and must, combine the most intense passion in the great revolutionary struggle with the coolest and most sober evaluation of the mad ravings of the bourgeoisie.”¹

¹ V. I. Lenin, “*Left-Wing*” Communism, *An Infantile Disorder*.

Aye, if we and the proletariat of the whole world firmly follow the path indicated by Lenin and Stalin, the bourgeoisie will perish in spite of everything. (*Applause.*)

Is The Victory of Fascism Inevitable?

Why was it that fascism could triumph, and how?

Fascism is the most vicious enemy of the working class and working people. Fascism is the enemy of nine-tenths of the German people, nine-tenths of the Austrian people, nine-tenths of the other peoples in fascist countries. How, in what way, could this vicious enemy triumph?

Fascism was able to come to power *primarily* because the working class, owing to the policy of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie pursued by the Social-Democratic leaders, *proved to be split, politically and organizationally disarmed*, in face of the onslaught of the bourgeoisie. And the Communist Parties, on the other hand, apart from and in opposition to the Social-Democrats, *were not strong enough* to rouse the masses and to lead them in a decisive struggle against fascism.

And, indeed, let the millions of Social-Democratic workers, who together with their Communist brothers are now experiencing the horrors of fascist barbarism, seriously reflect on the following: If, in 1918, when revolution broke out in Germany and Austria, the Austrian and German proletariat had not followed the Social-Democratic leadership of Otto Bauer, Friedrich Adler and Karl Renner in Austria and Ebert and Scheidemann in Germany, but had followed the road of the Russian Bolsheviks, the road of Lenin and Stalin, there would now be no fascism in Austria or Germany, in Italy or Hungary, in Poland or in the Balkans. Not the bourgeoisie, but the working class would long ago have been the master of the situation in Europe. (*Applause.*)

Take, for example, the *Austrian* Social-Democratic Party. The revolution of 1918 raised it to a tremendous height. It held the power in its hands, it held strong positions in the army and in the state apparatus. Relying on these positions, it could have nipped fascism in the bud. But it surrendered one position of the working class after another without resistance. It allowed the bourgeoisie to strengthen its power, annul the constitution, purge the state apparatus, army and police force of Social-Democratic functionaries, and take the arsenals away from the workers. It allowed the fascist bandits to murder Social-Democratic workers with impunity and accepted the terms of the Huettenberg pact, which gave the fascist elements entry to the factories. At the same

time the Social-Democratic leaders fooled the workers with the Linz program, which contained the alternative possibility of using armed force against the bourgeoisie and establishing the proletarian dictatorship, assuring them that in the event of the ruling class using force against the working class, the Party would reply by a call for general strike and for armed struggle. As though the whole policy of preparation for a fascist attack on the working class were not one chain of acts of violence against the working class masked by constitutional forms! Even on the eve and in the course of the February battles the Austrian Social-Democratic leaders left the heroically fighting Schutzbund isolated from the wide masses, and doomed the Austrian proletariat to defeat.

Was the victory of fascism inevitable in *Germany*? No, the German working class could have prevented it.

But in order to do so, it should have achieved a united anti-fascist proletarian front, and forced the Social-Democratic leaders to put a stop to their campaign against the Communists and to accept the repeated proposals of the Communist Party for united action against fascism.

When fascism was on the offensive and the bourgeois-democratic liberties were being progressively abolished by the bourgeoisie, it should not have contented itself with the verbal resolutions of the Social-Democrats, but should have replied by a genuine mass struggle, which would have made the fulfilment of the fascist plans of the German bourgeoisie more difficult.

It should not have allowed the prohibition of the League of Red Front Fighters by the government of Braun and Severing, and should have established fighting contact between the League and the Reichsbanner,¹ with its nearly one million members, and have compelled Braun and Severing to arm both these organizations in order to resist and smash the fascist bands.

It should have compelled the Social-Democratic leaders who headed the Prussian government to adopt measures of defence against fascism, arrest the fascist leaders, close down their press, confiscate their material resources and the resources of the capitalists who were financing the fascist movement, dissolve the fascist organizations, deprive them of their weapons and so forth.

Furthermore, it should have secured the re-establishment and exten-

¹ *Reichsbanner*—"The Flag of the Realm," a Social-Democratic semi-military mass organization.—Ed.

sion of all forms of social assistance and the introduction of a moratorium and crisis benefits for the peasants—who were being ruined under the influence of crisis—by taxing the banks and the trusts, in this way securing for itself the support of the working peasants. It was the fault of the Social-Democrats of Germany that this was not done, and that is why fascism was able to triumph.

Was it inevitable that the bourgeoisie and the aristocracy should have triumphed in *Spain*,¹ a country where the forces of proletarian revolt are so advantageously combined with a peasant war?

The Spanish Socialists were in the government from the first days of the revolution. Did they establish fighting contact between the working-class organizations of every political opinion, including the Communists and the Anarchists, and did they weld the working class into a united trade union organization? Did they demand the confiscation of all lands of the landlords, the church and the monasteries in favour of the peasants in order to win over the latter to the side of the revolution? Did they attempt to fight for national self-determination for the Catalonians and the Basques, and for the liberation of Morocco? Did they purge the army of monarchist and fascist elements and prepare it for passing over to the side of the workers and peasants? Did they dissolve the Civil Guard, so detested by the people, the executioner of every movement of the people? Did they strike at the fascist party of Gil Robles and at the might of the Catholic church? No, they did none of these things. They rejected the frequent proposals of the Communists for united action against the offensive of the bourgeois-landlord reaction and fascism; they passed election laws which enabled the reactionaries to gain a majority in the Cortes (parliament), laws which penalized the popular movement, laws under which the heroic miners of Asturias are now being tried. They had peasants who were fighting for land shot by the Civil Guard, and so on.

This is the way in which the Social-Democrats, by disorganizing and splitting the ranks of the working class, cleared the path to power for fascism in Germany, Austria and Spain.

Comrades, fascism also attained power for the reason that the proletariat found itself isolated from its natural allies. Fascism attained power because it was able to win over *large masses of the peasantry*, owing to the fact that the Social-Democrats, in the name of the working class, pursued what was in fact an anti-peasant policy. The peasant

¹ The fighting in Asturias in 1934.—*Ed.*

saw in power a number of Social-Democratic governments, which in his eyes were an embodiment of the power of the working class; but not one of them put an end to peasant want, none of them gave land to the peasantry. In Germany, the Social-Democrats did not touch the landlords; they combated the strikes of the agricultural workers, with the result that long before Hitler came to power the agricultural workers of Germany were deserting the reformist trade unions and in the majority of cases were going over to the Stahlhelm and to the National-Socialists.

Fascism also attained power for the reason that it was able to penetrate into the ranks of the *youth*, whereas the Social-Democrats diverted the working-class youth from the class struggle, while the revolutionary proletariat did not develop the necessary educational work among the youth and did not pay enough attention to the struggle for its specific interests and demands. Fascism grasped the very acute need of the youth for militant activity, and enticed a considerable section of the youth into its fighting detachments. The new generation of young men and women has not experienced the horrors of war. They have felt the full weight of the economic crisis, unemployment and the disintegration of bourgeois democracy. But, seeing no prospects for the future, large sections of the youth proved to be particularly receptive to fascist demagoguery, which depicted for them an alluring future should fascism succeed.

In this connection, we cannot avoid referring also to a number of *mistakes committed by the Communist Parties*, mistakes that hampered our struggle against fascism.

In our ranks there was an impermissible underestimation of the fascist danger, a tendency which to this day has not everywhere been overcome. Of this nature was the opinion formerly to be met with in our Parties that "Germany is not Italy," meaning that fascism may have succeeded in Italy, but that its success in Germany was out of the question, because the latter is an industrially and culturally highly developed country, with forty years of traditions of the working-class movement, in which fascism was impossible. Or the kind of opinion which is to be met with nowadays, to the effect that in countries of "classical" bourgeois democracy the soil for fascism does not exist. Such opinions have served and may serve to relax vigilance toward the fascist danger, and to render the mobilization of the proletariat in the struggle against fascism more difficult.

One might also cite not a few instances where Communists were taken unawares by the fascist coup. Remember Bulgaria, where the

leadership of our Party took up a "neutral," but in fact opportunist, position with regard to the coup d'état of June 9, 1923; Poland, where, in May 1926, the leadership of the Communist Party, making a wrong estimate of the motive forces of the Polish revolution, did not realize the fascist nature of Pilsudski's coup, and trailed in the rear of events; Finland, where our Party based itself on a false conception of slow and gradual fascization and overlooked the fascist coup which was being prepared by the leading group of the bourgeoisie and which took the Party and the working class unawares.

When National-Socialism had already become a menacing mass movement in Germany, there were comrades who regarded the Bruening government as already a government of fascist dictatorship, and who boastfully declared: "If Hitler's Third Reich ever comes about, it will be six feet underground, and above it will be the victorious power of the workers."

Our comrades in Germany for a long time failed to fully reckon with the wounded national sentiments and the indignation of the masses against the Versailles Treaty; they treated as of little account the waverings of the peasantry and petty bourgeoisie; they were late in drawing up their program of social and national emancipation, and when they did put it forward they were unable to adapt it to the concrete demands and to the level of the masses. They were even unable to popularize it widely among the masses.

In a number of countries the necessary development of a mass fight against fascism was replaced by barren debates on the nature of fascism "in general" and by a *narrow sectarian attitude* in formulating and solving the immediate political tasks of the Party.

Comrades, it is not simply because we want to dig up the past that we speak of the causes of the victory of fascism, that we point to the historical responsibility of the Social-Democrats for the defeat of the working class, and that we also point out our own mistakes in the fight against fascism. We are not historians divorced from living reality; we, active fighters of the working class, are obliged to answer the question that is tormenting millions of workers: *Can the victory of fascism be prevented, and how?* And we reply to these millions of workers: Yes, comrades, the road to fascism can be blocked. It is quite possible. It depends on ourselves—on the workers, the peasants and all working people!

Whether the victory of fascism can be prevented depends *first and foremost* on the militant activity of the working class itself, on whether its forces are welded into a single militant army combating the offensive

of capitalism and fascism. By establishing its fighting unity, the proletariat would paralyze the influence of fascism over the peasantry, the petty bourgeoisie of the towns, the youth and the intelligentsia, and would be able to neutralize one section of them and win over the other section.

Second, it depends on the existence of a strong revolutionary party, correctly leading the struggle of the working people against fascism. A party which systematically calls on the workers to retreat in the face of fascism and permits the fascist bourgeoisie to strengthen its positions will inevitably lead the workers to defeat.

Third, it depends on a correct policy of the working class toward the peasantry and the petty-bourgeois masses of the towns. These masses must be taken as they are, and not as we should like to have them. It is only in the process of the struggle that they will overcome their doubts and wavering. It is only by a patient attitude toward their inevitable waverings, it is only by the political help of the proletariat, that they will be able to rise to a higher level of revolutionary consciousness and activity.

Fourth, it depends on the vigilance and timely action of the revolutionary proletariat. The latter must not allow fascism to take it unawares, it must not surrender the initiative to fascism, but must inflict decisive blows on it before it can gather its forces, it must not allow fascism to consolidate its position, it must repel fascism wherever and whenever it rears its head, it must not allow fascism to gain new positions. This is what the French proletariat is so successfully trying to do. (*Applause.*)

These are the main conditions for preventing the growth of fascism and its accession to power.

Fascism—a Ferocious But Unstable Power

The fascist dictatorship of the bourgeoisie is a ferocious power, but an unstable one.

What are the chief causes of the instability of the fascist dictatorship?

Fascism undertakes to overcome the disharmonies and antagonisms within the bourgeois camp, but it makes these antagonisms even more acute. Fascism tries to establish its political monopoly by violently destroying other political parties. But the existence of the capitalist system, the existence of various classes and the accentuation of class contradictions inevitably tend to undermine and explode the political

monopoly of fascism. This is not the case of a Soviet country, where the dictatorship of the proletariat is also realized by a party with a political monopoly, but where this political monopoly accords with the interests of millions of working people and is increasingly being based on the construction of a classless society. In a fascist country the party of the fascists cannot preserve its monopoly for long, because it cannot set itself the aim of abolishing classes and class contradictions. It puts an end to the legal existence of bourgeois parties. But a number of them continue to maintain an illegal existence, while the Communist Party even in conditions of illegality continues to make progress, becomes steeled and tempered and leads the struggle of the proletariat against the fascist dictatorship. Hence, under the blows of class contradictions, the political monopoly of fascism is bound to explode.

Another reason for the instability of the fascist dictatorship is that the contrast between the anti-capitalist demagoguery of fascism and its policy of enriching the monopolist bourgeoisie in the most piratical fashion makes it easier to expose the class nature of fascism and tends to shake and narrow its mass basis.

Furthermore, the victory of fascism arouses the deep hatred and indignation of the masses, helps to revolutionize them, and provides a powerful stimulus for a united front of the proletariat against fascism.

By conducting a policy of economic nationalism (autarky) and by seizing the greater part of the national income for the purpose of preparing for war, fascism undermines the whole economic life of the country and accentuates the economic war between the capitalist states. To the conflicts that arise among the bourgeoisie it lends the character of sharp and at times bloody collisions that undermine the stability of the fascist state power in the eyes of the people. A government which murders its own followers, as happened in Germany on June 30 of last year, a fascist government against which another section of the fascist bourgeoisie is conducting an armed fight (the National-Socialist *putsch* in Austria and the violent attacks of individual fascist groups on the fascist government in Poland, Bulgaria, Finland and other countries)—a government of this character cannot for long maintain its authority in the eyes of the broad mass of the petty bourgeoisie.

The working class must be able to take advantage of the antagonisms and conflicts within the bourgeois camp, but it must not cherish the illusion that fascism will exhaust itself of its own accord. Fascism will not collapse automatically. Only the revolutionary activity

of the working class can help to take advantage of the conflicts which inevitably arise within the bourgeois camp in order to undermine the fascist dictatorship and to overthrow it.

By destroying the relics of bourgeois democracy, by elevating open violence to a system of government, fascism shakes democratic illusions and undermines the authority of the law in the eyes of the working people. This is particularly the case in countries such as Austria and Spain, where the workers have taken up arms against fascism. In Austria, the heroic struggle of the Schutzbund and the Communists, in spite of its defeat, shook the stability of the fascist dictatorship from the very outset. In Spain, the bourgeoisie did not succeed in putting the fascist muzzle on the working people. The armed struggles in Austria and Spain have resulted in ever wider masses of the working class coming to realize the necessity for a revolutionary class struggle.

Only such monstrous philistines, such lackeys of the bourgeoisie, as the superannuated theoretician of the Second International, Karl Kautsky, are capable of casting reproaches at the workers, to the effect that they should not have taken up arms in Austria and Spain. What would the working-class movement in Austria and Spain look like today if the working class of these countries were guided by the treacherous counsels of the Kautskys? The working class would be experiencing profound demoralization in its ranks.

"The school of civil war," Lenin says, "does not leave the people unaffected. It is a harsh school, and its complete curriculum *inevitably* includes the victories of the counter-revolution, the debaucheries of enraged reactionaries, savage punishments meted out by the old governments to the rebels, etc. But only downright pedants and mentally decrepit mummies can grieve over the fact that nations are entering this painful school; this school teaches the oppressed classes how to conduct civil war; it teaches how to bring about a victorious revolution; it concentrates in the masses of present-day slaves that hatred which is always harboured by the downtrodden, dull, ignorant slaves, and which leads those slaves who have become conscious of the shame of their slavery to the greatest historic exploits."¹

The triumph of fascism in Germany has, as we know, been followed by a new wave of the fascist offensive, which, in Austria, led to

¹ V. I. Lenin, "Inflammable Material in World Politics," *Selected Works*, Vol. IV.

the provocation by Dollfuss, in Spain to the new onslaughts of counter-revolution on the revolutionary conquests of the masses, in Poland to the fascist reform of the constitution, while in France it spurred the armed detachments of the fascists to attempt a coup d'état in February 1934. But this victory, and the frenzy of the fascist dictatorship, called forth a counter-movement for a united proletarian front against fascism on an international scale.

The burning of the Reichstag, which served as a signal for the general attack of fascism on the working class, the seizure and spoliation of the trade unions and the other working-class organizations, the groans of the tortured anti-fascists rising from the vaults of the fascist barracks and concentration camps, are making it clear to the masses what has been the outcome of the reactionary, disruptive role played by the German Social-Democratic leaders, who rejected the proposal made by the Communists for a joint struggle against advancing fascism. These things are convincing the masses of the necessity of amalgamating all forces of the working class for the overthrow of fascism.

Hitler's victory also provided a decisive stimulus for the creation of a united front of the working class against fascism in France. Hitler's victory not only aroused in the workers a fear of the fate that befell the German workers, not only kindled hatred for the executioners of their German class brothers, but also strengthened in them the determination never in any circumstances to allow in their country what happened to the working class in Germany.

The powerful urge toward the united front in all the capitalist countries shows that the lessons of defeat have not been in vain. The working class is beginning to act in a *new way*. The initiative shown by the Communist Party in the organization of the united front and the supreme self-sacrifice displayed by the Communists, by the revolutionary workers in the struggle against fascism, have resulted in an unprecedented increase in the prestige of the Communist International. At the same time, a deep crisis is developing in the Second International, a crisis which is particularly noticeable and has particularly accentuated since the bankruptcy of German Social-Democracy.

With ever greater ease are the Social-Democratic workers able to convince themselves that fascist Germany, with all its horrors and barbarities, is in the final analysis *the result of the Social-Democratic policy of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie*. These masses are coming ever more clearly to realize that the path along which the German Social-Democratic leaders led the proletariat must not be traversed again. Never has there been such ideological dissension in the

camp of the Second International as at the present time. A process of differentiation is taking place in all the Social-Democratic Parties. Within their ranks *two principal camps* are forming: side by side with the existing camp of reactionary elements, who are trying in every way to preserve the bloc between the Social-Democrats and the bourgeoisie, and who rabidly reject a united front with the Communists, *there is beginning to form a camp of revolutionary elements who entertain doubts as to the correctness of the policy of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie, who are in favour of the creation of a united front with the Communists, and who are increasingly coming to adopt the position of the revolutionary class struggle.*

Thus fascism, which appeared as the result of the decline of the capitalist system, in the long run acts as a factor of its *further disintegration*. Thus fascism, which has undertaken to bury Marxism, the revolutionary movement of the working class, is, as a result of the dialectics of life and the class struggle, itself leading to the *further development of the forces* that are bound to serve as its grave-diggers, the grave-diggers of capitalism. (*Applause.*)

II. UNITED FRONT OF THE WORKING CLASS AGAINST FASCISM

Comrades, millions of workers and working people of the capitalist countries ask the question: How can fascism be prevented from coming to power and how can fascism be overthrown after it has attained power? To this the Communist International replies: *The first thing that must be done, the thing with which to begin, is to form a united front, to establish unity of action of the workers in every factory, in every district, in every region, in every country, all over the world. Unity of action of the proletariat on a national and international scale is the mighty weapon which renders the working class capable not only of successful defence but also of successful counter-attack against fascism, against the class enemy.*

Importance of the United Front

Is it not clear that joint action by the supporters of the parties and organizations of the two Internationals, the Communist and the Second International, would make it easier for the masses to repulse the fascist onslaught, and would heighten the political importance of the working class?

Joint action by the parties of both Internationals against fascism,

however, would not be confined in its effects to influencing their present adherents, the Communists and Social-Democrats; it would also exert a powerful influence on the ranks of the *Catholic, Anarchist and unorganized workers, even upon those who have temporarily become the victims of fascist demagoguery.*

Moreover, a powerful united front of the proletariat would exert tremendous influence on *all other strata of the working people*, on the peasantry, on the urban petty bourgeoisie, on the intelligentsia. A united front would inspire the wavering groups with faith in the strength of the working class.

But even this is not all. The proletariat of the imperialist countries has possible allies not only in the working people of its own countries but also in the *oppressed nations of the colonies and semi-colonies.* Inasmuch as the proletariat is split both nationally and internationally, inasmuch as one of its parts supports the policy of collaboration with the bourgeoisie, in particular its system of oppression in the colonies and semi-colonies, a barrier is put between the working class and the oppressed peoples of the colonies and semi-colonies, and the world anti-imperialist front is weakened. Every step by the proletariat of the imperialist countries on the road to unity of action in the direction of supporting the struggle for the liberation of the colonial peoples means transforming the colonies and semi-colonies into one of the most important reserves of the world proletariat.

If, finally, we bear in mind that international unity of action by the proletariat relies on the steadily growing strength of the proletarian state, the land of socialism, the Soviet Union, we see what broad perspectives are revealed by the realization of proletarian unity of action on a national and international scale.

The establishment of unity of action by all sections of the working class, irrespective of the party or organization to which they belong, is necessary *even before the majority of the working class is united in the struggle for the overthrow of capitalism and the victory of the proletarian revolution.*

Is it possible to realize this unity of action of the proletariat in the individual countries and throughout the whole world? Yes, it is. And it is possible at this very moment. The Communist International *puts no conditions for unity of action except one, and that an elementary condition acceptable for all workers, viz., that the unity of action be directed against fascism, against the offensive of capital, against the threat of war, against the class enemy.* This is our condition.

The Chief Arguments of the Opponents of the United Front

What objections can the opponents of the united front have, and what objections do they voice?

Some say: "To the Communists the slogan of the united front is merely a manœuvre." But if this is the case, we reply, why don't you expose this "Communist manœuvre" by your honest participation in the united front? We declare frankly: We want unity of action by the working class so that the proletariat may grow strong in its struggle against the bourgeoisie, in order that while defending today its current interests against attacking capital, against fascism, the proletariat may reach a position tomorrow to create the preliminary conditions for its final emancipation.

"The Communists attack us," say others. But listen, we have repeatedly declared: We shall not attack anyone, whether persons, organizations or parties, standing for the united front of the working class against the class enemy. But at the same time it is our duty, in the interests of the proletariat and its cause, to criticize those persons, organizations and parties that hinder unity of action by the workers.

"We cannot form a united front with the Communists, since they have a different program," says a third group. But you yourselves say that your program differs from the program of the bourgeois parties, and yet this did not and does not prevent you from entering into coalitions with these parties.

"The bourgeois-democratic parties are better allies against fascism than the Communists," say the opponents of the united front and the advocates of coalition with the bourgeoisie. But what does Germany's experience teach? Did not the Social-Democrats form a bloc with those "better" allies? And what were the results?

"If we establish a united front with the Communists, the petty bourgeoisie will take fright at the 'Red danger' and will desert to the fascists," we hear it said quite frequently. But does the united front represent a threat to the peasants, small traders, artisans, working intellectuals? No, the united front is a threat to the big bourgeoisie, the financial magnates, the Junkers and other exploiters, whose regime brings complete ruin to all these strata.

"Social-Democracy is for democracy, the Communists are for dictatorship; therefore we cannot form a united front with the Communists," say some of the Social-Democratic leaders. But are we offering you now a united front for the purpose of proclaiming the dictatorship of the proletariat? We make no such proposal now.

"Let the Communists recognize democracy, let them come out in its defence; then we shall be ready for a united front." To this we reply: We are the adherents of Soviet democracy, the democracy of the working people, the most consistent democracy in the world. But in the capitalist countries we defend and shall continue to defend every inch of bourgeois-democratic liberties, which are being attacked by fascism and bourgeois reaction, because the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat so dictate.

"But can the tiny Communist Parties contribute anything by participating in the united front brought about by the Labour Party," say, for instance, the Labour leaders of Great Britain. Remember how the Austrian Social-Democratic leaders said the same thing with reference to the small Austrian Communist Party. And what have events shown? It was not the Austrian Social-Democratic Party headed by Otto Bauer and Karl Renner that proved right, but the small Austrian Communist Party which at the right moment signaled the fascist danger in Austria and called upon the workers to struggle. The whole experience of the labour movement has shown that the Communists, with all their relative insignificance in numbers, are the motive power of the militant activity of the proletariat. Besides this, it must not be forgotten that the Communist Parties of Austria or Great Britain are not only the tens of thousands of workers who are adherents of the Party, but are *parts* of the world communist movement, are *Sections of the Communist International*, whose *leading* Party is the Party of a proletariat which has already achieved victory and rules over one-sixth of the globe.

"But the united front did not prevent fascism from being victorious in the Saar," is another objection advanced by the opponents of the united front. Strange is the logic of these gentlemen! First they leave no stone unturned to ensure the victory of fascism and then they rejoice with malicious glee because the united front which they entered into only at the last moment did not lead to the victory of the workers.

"If we were to form a united front with the Communists, we should have to withdraw from the coalition, and reactionary and fascist parties would enter the government," say the Social-Democratic leaders holding cabinet posts in various countries. Very well. Was not the German Social-Democratic Party in a coalition government? It was. Was not the Austrian Social-Democratic Party in office? Were not the Spanish Socialists in the same government as the bourgeoisie? They were. Did the participation of the Social-Democratic Parties in the bourgeois coalition governments in these countries prevent fascism from attacking the proletariat? It did not. Consequently it is as clear as daylight

that participation of Social-Democratic ministers in bourgeois governments *is not* a barrier to fascism.

"The Communists act like dictators, they want to prescribe and dictate everything to us." No. We prescribe nothing and dictate nothing. We only put forward our proposals, being convinced that if realized they will meet the interests of the working people. This is not only the right but the duty of all those acting in the name of the workers. You are afraid of the "dictatorship" of the Communists? Let us jointly submit to the workers all proposals, both yours and ours, jointly discuss them together with all the workers, and choose those proposals which are most useful to the cause of the working class.

Thus all these arguments against the united front *will not stand the slightest criticism*. They are rather the flimsy excuses of the reactionary leaders of Social-Democracy, who prefer their united front with the bourgeoisie to the united front of the proletariat.

No. These excuses will not hold water. The international proletariat has experienced the suffering caused by the split in the working class, and becomes more and more convinced that *the united front, the unity of action of the proletariat on a national and international scale, is at once necessary and perfectly possible*. (Applause.)

Content and Forms of the United Front

What is and ought to be the basic content of the united front at the present stage? The defence of the immediate economic and political interests of the working class, the defence of the working class against fascism, must form the *starting point and main content* of the united front in all capitalist countries.

We must **not** confine ourselves to bare appeals to struggle for the proletarian dictatorship. We must find and advance those slogans and forms of struggle which arise from the vital needs of the masses, from the level of their fighting capacity at the present stage of development.

We must point out to the masses what they must do *today* to defend themselves against capitalist spoliation and fascist barbarity.

We must strive to establish the widest united front with the aid of joint action by workers' organizations of different trends for the defence of the vital interests of the labouring masses. This means:

First, joint struggle really to shift the burden of the consequences of the crisis onto the shoulders of the ruling classes, the shoulders of the capitalists, landlords—in a word, to the shoulders of the rich.

Second, joint struggle against all forms of the fascist offensive, in

defence of the gains and the rights of the working people, against the destruction of bourgeois-democratic liberties.

Third, joint struggle against the approaching danger of imperialist war, a struggle that will make the preparation of such a war more difficult.

We must tirelessly prepare the working class for a *rapid change in forms and methods of struggle* when there is a change in the situation. As the movement grows and the unity of the working class strengthens, we must go further, and prepare the transition *from the defensive to the offensive against capital*, steering toward the *organization of a mass political strike*. It must be an absolute condition of such a strike to draw into it the main trade unions of the countries concerned.

Communists, of course, cannot and must not for a moment abandon their own *independent work* of Communist education, organization and mobilization of the masses. However, to ensure that the workers find the road of unity of action, it is necessary to strive at the same time both for short-term and for long-term agreements that provide for *joint action with Social-Democratic Parties, reformist trade unions and other organizations of the working people* against the class enemies of the proletariat. The chief stress in all this must be laid on developing *mass action*, locally, *to be carried out by the local organizations* through local agreements. While loyally carrying out the conditions of all agreements made with them, we shall mercilessly expose all sabotage of joint action on the part of persons and organizations participating in the united front. To any attempt to wreck the agreements—and such attempts may possibly be made—we shall reply by appealing to the masses while continuing untiringly to struggle for restoration of the broken unity of action.

It goes without saying that the practical realization of the united front will take *various* forms in various countries, depending upon the condition and character of the workers' organizations and their political level, upon the situation in the particular country, upon the changes in progress in the international labour movement, etc.

These forms may include, for instance: coordinated joint action of the workers to be agreed upon *from case to case* on definite occasions, on individual demands or on the basis of a common platform; coordinated actions in *individual enterprises* or by *whole industries*; coordinated actions on a *local, regional, national or international scale*; coordinated actions for the organization of the *economic* struggle of the workers, for carrying out mass *political* actions, for the organization of *joint self-defence* against fascist attacks; coordinated action

in rendering aid to political prisoners and their families, in the field of struggle against social reaction; joint actions in the defence of the interests of the youth and women, in the field of the cooperative movement, cultural activity, sport, etc.

It would be insufficient to rest content with the conclusion of a pact providing for joint action and the formation of contact committees from the parties and organizations participating in the united front, like those we have in France, for instance. That is only the first step. The pact is an auxiliary means for obtaining joint action, but by itself it does not constitute a united front. A contact commission between the leaders of the Communist and Socialist Parties is necessary to facilitate the carrying out of joint action, but by itself it is far from adequate for a real development of the united front, for drawing the widest masses into the struggle against fascism.

The Communists and all revolutionary workers must strive for the formation of elected (and in the countries of fascist dictatorship—selected from the most authoritative participants in the united front movement) *non-partisan class bodies of the united front*, at the *factories*, among the *unemployed*, in the *working-class districts*, among the *small towns-folk* and in the *villages*. Only such bodies will be able to include also in the united front movement the vast masses of unorganized working people, and will be able to assist in developing mass initiative in the struggle against the capitalist offensive, against fascism and reaction, and on this basis create the necessary *broad active rank and file of the united front* and train hundreds and thousands of non-Party Bolsheviks in the capitalist countries.

Joint action of the *organized* workers is the beginning, the foundation. But we must not lose sight of the fact that the unorganized masses constitute the vast majority of workers. Thus, in France the number of organized workers—Communists, Socialists, trade union members of various trends—is altogether *about one million*, while the total number of workers is eleven million. In Great Britain there are approximately *five million* members of trade unions and parties of various trends. At the same time the total number of workers is *fourteen million*. In the United States of America about *five million* workers are organized, while altogether there are *thirty-eight million* workers in that country. About the same ratio holds good for a number of other countries. In “normal” times this mass in the main does not participate in political life. But now this gigantic mass is getting into motion more and more, is being brought into political life, comes out in the political arena.

The creation of non-partisan class bodies is the *best form* for carrying out, extending and strengthening the united front among the rank and file of the masses. These bodies will likewise be the best bulwark against any attempt of the opponents of the united front to disrupt the growing unity of action of the working class.

The Anti-Fascist People's Front

In mobilizing the mass of working people for the struggle against fascism, the formation of a *wide anti-fascist People's Front on the basis of the proletarian united front* is a particularly important task. The success of the whole struggle of the proletariat is closely bound up with the establishment of a fighting alliance between the proletariat, on the one hand, and the labouring peasantry and basic mass of the urban petty bourgeoisie, who together form the majority of the population even in industrially developed countries, on the other.

In its agitation fascism, desirous of winning these masses to its own side, tries to set the mass of working people in town and countryside against the revolutionary proletariat, frightening the petty bourgeoisie with the bogey of the "Red peril." We must *turn this weapon against those who wield it* and show the working peasants, artisans and intellectuals whence the real danger threatens. We must *show concretely* who it is that piles the burden of taxes and imposts on to the peasant and squeezes usurious interest out of him; who it is that, while owning the best land and every form of wealth, drives the peasant and his family from their plot of land and dooms them to unemployment and poverty. We must explain concretely, patiently and persistently who it is that ruins the artisans and handicraftsmen with taxes, imposts, high rents, and competition impossible for them to withstand; who it is that throws into the street and deprives of employment the wide masses of the working intelligentsia.

But this is *not enough*.

The fundamental, the most decisive thing in establishing the anti-fascist People's Front is *resolute action of the revolutionary proletariat* in defence of the demands of these sections of the people, particularly the working peasantry—demands in line with the basic interests of the proletariat—and in the process of struggle combining the demands of the working class with these demands.

In forming the anti-fascist People's Front, a correct approach to those organizations and parties whose membership comprises a con-

siderable number of the working peasantry and the mass of the urban petty bourgeoisie is of great importance.

In the capitalist countries the majority of these parties and organizations, political as well as economic, are still under the influence of the bourgeoisie and follow it. The social composition of these parties and organizations is heterogeneous. They include rich peasants side by side with landless peasants, big business men alongside of petty shopkeepers; but control is in the hands of the former, the agents of big capital. This obliges us to *approach the different organizations in different ways*, taking into consideration that not infrequently the bulk of the membership does not know anything about the real political character of its leadership. Under certain conditions we can and must try to draw these parties and organizations or certain sections of them to the side of the anti-fascist People's Front, despite their bourgeois leadership. Such, for instance, is today the situation in France with the Radical Party, in the United States with various farmers' organizations, in Poland with the "Stronnictwo Ludowe," in Yugoslavia with the Croatian Peasants' Party, in Bulgaria with the Agrarian League, in Greece with the Agrarians, etc. But regardless of whether or not there is any chance of attracting these parties and organizations as a whole to the People's Front, our tactics must *under all circumstances* be directed toward drawing the small peasants, artisans, handicraftsmen, etc., among their members into the anti-fascist People's Front.

Hence, you see that in this field we must all along the line put an end to what has not unfrequently occurred in our work—neglect or contempt of the various organizations and parties of the peasants, artisans and the mass of petty bourgeoisie in the towns.

Key Questions of the United Front in Individual Countries

There are in every country certain *key questions* which at the present stage are agitating vast masses of the population and around which the struggle for the establishment of the united front must be developed. If these key points, or key questions, are properly grasped, it will ensure and accelerate the establishment of the united front.

A. The United States of America

Let us take, for example, so important a country in the capitalist world as the United States of America. There millions of people have

been set into motion by the crisis. The program for the recovery of capitalism has collapsed. Vast masses are beginning to abandon the bourgeois parties and are at present at the crossroads.

Embryo American fascism is trying to direct the disillusionment and discontent of these masses into reactionary fascist channels. It is a peculiarity of the development of American fascism that at the present stage it comes forward principally in the guise of an opposition to fascism, which it accuses of being an "un-American" tendency imported from abroad. In contradistinction to German fascism, which acts under anti-constitutional slogans, American fascism tries to portray itself as the custodian of the Constitution and "American democracy." It does not as yet represent a directly menacing force. But if it succeeds in penetrating to the wide masses who have become disillusioned with the old bourgeois parties it may become a serious menace in the very near future.

And what would the victory of fascism in the United States involve? For the mass of working people it would, of course, involve the unprecedented strengthening of the regime of exploitation and the destruction of the working-class movement. And what would be the international significance of this victory of fascism? As we know, the United States is not Hungary, or Finland, or Bulgaria, or Latvia. The victory of fascism in the United States would vitally change the whole international situation.

Under these circumstances, can the American proletariat content itself with organizing only its class conscious vanguard, which is prepared to follow the revolutionary path? No.

It is perfectly obvious that the interests of the American proletariat demand that all its forces dissociate themselves from the capitalist parties without delay. It must find in good time ways and suitable forms to prevent fascism from winning over the wide mass of discontented working people. And here it must be said that under American conditions the creation of a mass party of working people, a "*Workers' and Farmers' Party*," might serve as such a suitable form. *Such a party would be a specific form of the mass People's Front in America* and should be put in opposition to the parties of the trusts and the banks, and likewise to growing fascism. Such a party, of course, will be *neither Socialist nor Communist*. But it *must be* an anti-fascist party and *must not be an anti-Communist Party*. The program of this party must be directed against the banks, trusts and monopolies, against the principal enemies of the people, who are gambling on the woes of the latter. Such a party will justify its name

only if it defends the urgent demands of the working class; only if it fights for genuine social legislation, for unemployment insurance; only if it fights for land for the white and black sharecroppers and for their liberation from debt burdens; only if it tries to secure the cancellation of the farmers' indebtedness; only if it fights for equal status for Negroes; only if it defends the demands of the war veterans and the interests of members of the liberal professions, small businessmen and artisans. And so on.

It goes without saying that such a party will fight for the election of its own candidates to local government, to the state legislatures, to the House of Representatives and the Senate.

Our comrades in the United States acted rightly in taking the initiative for the creation of such a party. But they still have to take effective measures in order to make the creation of such a party the cause of the masses themselves. The question of forming a "Workers' and Farmers' Party," and its program, should be discussed at mass meetings of the people. We should develop the most widespread movement for the creation of such a party, and take the lead in it. In no case must the initiative of organizing the party be allowed to pass to elements desirous of utilizing the discontent of the millions who have become disillusioned in both the bourgeois parties, Democratic and Republican, in order to create a "third party" in the United States, as an anti-Communist party, a party directed against the revolutionary movement.

B. Great Britain

In Great Britain, as a result of the mass action of the British workers, Mosley's fascist organization has for the time being been pushed into the background. But we must not close our eyes to the fact that the so-called "National Government" is passing a number of reactionary measures directed against the working class, as a result of which conditions are being created in Great Britain, too, which will make it easier for the bourgeoisie, if necessary, to pass to a fascist regime. At the present stage, fighting the fascist danger in Great Britain means primarily fighting the "National Government" and its reactionary measures, fighting the offensive of capital, fighting for the demands of the unemployed, fighting against wage reductions and for the repeal of all those laws with the help of which the British bourgeoisie is lowering the standard of living of the masses.

But the growing hatred of the working class for the "National Government" is uniting increasingly large numbers under the slogan

of the formation of a *new Labour government* in Great Britain. Can the Communists ignore this frame of mind of the masses, who still retain faith in a Labour government? No, comrades. We must find a way of approaching these masses. We tell them openly, as did the Thirteenth Congress of the British Communist Party, that we Communists are in favour of a Soviet government as the only form of government capable of emancipating the workers from the yoke of capital. But you want a Labour government? Very well. We have been and are fighting hand in hand with you for the defeat of the "National Government." We are prepared to support your fight for the formation of a new Labour government, in spite of the fact that both the previous Labour governments failed to fulfil the promises made to the working class by the Labour Party. We do not expect this government to carry out socialist measures. But *we shall present it with the demand*, in the name of millions of workers, that it defend the most essential economic and political interests of the working class and of all working people. Let us jointly discuss a common program of such demands, and let us achieve that unity of action which the proletariat requires in order to repel the reactionary offensive of the "National Government," the attack of capital and fascism and the preparations for a new war. On this basis, the British comrades are prepared at the forthcoming parliamentary elections to cooperate with branches of the Labour Party against the "National Government," and also against Lloyd George, who is trying in his own way in the interests of the British bourgeoisie to lure the masses into following him against the cause of the working class.

This position of the British Communists is a correct one. It will help them to set up a militant united front with the millions of members of the British trade unions and Labour Party.

While always remaining in the front ranks of the fighting proletariat, and pointing out to the masses the only right path—the path of struggle for the revolutionary overthrow of the rule of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of a Soviet government—the Communists, in defining their immediate political aims, must not attempt to leap over those necessary stages of the mass movement in the course of which the working class by its own experience outlives its illusions and passes over to Communism.

C. France

France, as we know, is a country in which the working class is setting an example to the whole international proletariat of how to

fight fascism. The French Communist Party is setting an example to all the Sections of the Communist International of how the tactics of the united front should be applied; the Socialist workers are setting an example of what the Social-Democratic workers of other capitalist countries should now be doing in the fight against fascism. (*Applause.*) The significance of the anti-fascist demonstration attended by half a million people in Paris on July 14 of this year, and of the numerous demonstrations in other French cities, is tremendous. This is not merely a United Front movement of the workers; it is the beginning of a wide general People's Front against fascism in France.

This united front movement enhances the confidence of the working class in its own forces; it strengthens its consciousness of the leading role it is playing in relation to the peasantry, the petty bourgeoisie of the towns, and the intelligentsia; it extends the influence of the Communist Party among the mass of the working class and therefore makes the proletariat stronger in the fight against fascism. It is arousing in good time the vigilance of the masses in regard to the fascist danger. And it will serve as a contagious example for the development of the anti-fascist struggle in other capitalist countries, and will exercise a heartening influence on the proletarians of Germany, oppressed by the fascist dictatorship.

The victory, needless to say, is a big one; but still it does not decide the issue of the anti-fascist struggle. The overwhelming majority of the French people are undoubtedly opposed to fascism. But the bourgeoisie is able by armed force to violate the popular will. The fascist movement is continuing to develop absolutely freely, with the active support of monopoly capital, the state apparatus of the bourgeoisie, the general staff of the French army, and the reactionary leaders of the Catholic church—that stronghold of all reaction. The most powerful fascist organization, the *Croix de Feu*, now commands 300,000 armed men, the backbone of which consists of 60,000 officers of the reserve. It holds strong positions in the police, the gendarmerie, the army, the air force and in all government offices. The recent municipal elections have shown that in France it is not only the revolutionary forces that are growing, but also the forces of fascism. If fascism succeeds in penetrating widely among the peasantry, and in securing the support of one section of the army, while the other section remains neutral, the masses of the French working people will not be able to prevent the fascists from coming to power. Comrades, do not forget the organizational weakness of the French labour

movement, which facilitates fascist attack. The working class and all anti-fascists in France have no grounds for resting content with the results already achieved.

What are the tasks facing the working class in France?

First, to establish the united front not only in the political sphere, but also in the economic sphere, in order to organize the struggle against the capitalist offensive, and by its pressure to smash the resistance offered to the united front by the leaders of the reformist Confederation of Labour.

Second, to achieve trade union unity in France—united trade unions based on the class struggle.

Third, to enlist in the anti-fascist movement the wide mass of the peasants and petty bourgeoisie, devoting special attention in the program of the anti-fascist People's Front to their urgent demands.

Fourth, to strengthen organizationally and extend further the anti-fascist movement which has already developed, by the widespread creation of non-partisan elected bodies of the anti-fascist People's Front, whose influence will extend to wider masses than those in the present parties and organizations of working people in France.

Fifth, to force the disbanding and disarming of the fascist organizations, as being organizations of conspirators against the republic and agents of Hitler in France.

Sixth, to secure that the state apparatus, army and police shall be purged of the conspirators who are preparing a fascist coup.

Seventh, to develop the struggle against the leaders of the reactionary cliques of the Catholic church, as one of the most important strongholds of French fascism.

Eighth, to link up the army with the anti-fascist movement by creating in its ranks committees for the defence of the republic and the constitution, directed against those who want to utilize the army for an anti-constitutional coup d'état (*applause*); not to allow the reactionary forces in France to wreck the Franco-Soviet pact, which defends the cause of peace against the aggression of German fascism. (*Applause.*)

And if in France the anti-fascist movement leads to the formation of a government which will carry on a real struggle against French fascism—not in words but in deeds—and which will carry out the program of demands of the anti-fascist People's Front, the Communists, while remaining the irreconcilable foes of every bourgeois government and supporters of a Soviet government, will, nevertheless,

in face of the growing fascist danger, *be prepared to support such a government.* (Applause.)

The United Front and the Fascists Mass Organizations

Comrades, the fight for the establishment of the united front in countries where the fascists are in power is perhaps the most important problem facing us. In such countries, of course, the fight is carried on under far more difficult conditions than in countries with legal labour movements. Nevertheless, all the conditions exist in fascist countries for the development of a real anti-fascist People's Front in the struggle against the fascist dictatorship, since the Social-Democratic, Catholic and other workers, in Germany, for instance, are able to realize more directly the need for a joint struggle with the Communists against the fascist dictatorship. Wide strata of the petty bourgeoisie and the peasantry, having already tasted the bitter fruits of fascist rule, are growing increasingly discontented and disillusioned, which makes it easier to enlist them in the anti-fascist People's Front.

The principal task in fascist countries, particularly in Germany and Italy, where fascism has managed to gain a mass basis and has forced the workers and other working people into its organizations, consists in skilfully combining the fight against the fascist dictatorship from without with the undermining of it from within, inside the fascist mass organizations and bodies. Special methods and means of approach, suited to the concrete conditions prevailing in these countries must be learned, mastered and applied, so as to facilitate the rapid disintegration of the mass basis of fascism and to prepare the way for the overthrow of the fascist dictatorship. We must learn, master and apply this, and not only shout "Down with Hitler!" and "Down with Mussolini!" Yes, learn, master and apply.

This is a difficult and complex task. It is all the more difficult in that our experience in successfully combating fascist dictatorship is extremely limited. Our Italian comrades, for instance, have already been fighting under the conditions of a fascist dictatorship for about thirteen years. Nevertheless, they have not yet succeeded in developing a real mass struggle against fascism, and therefore they have unfortunately been little able in this respect to help the Communist Parties in other fascist countries by their positive experience.

The German and Italian Communists, and the Communists in other fascist countries, as well as the Communist youth, have displayed prodigious valour; they have made and are daily making tremendous

sacrifices. We all bow our heads in honour of such heroism and sacrifices. But heroism alone is not enough. (*Applause.*) Heroism must be combined with day-to-day work among the masses, with concrete struggle against fascism, so as to achieve the most tangible results in this sphere. In our struggle against fascist dictatorship it is particularly dangerous to confuse the wish with fact. We must base ourselves on the facts, on the actual concrete situation.

What is now the actual situation in Germany, for instance?

The masses are becoming increasingly discontented and disillusioned with the policy of the fascist dictatorship, and this even assumes the form of partial strikes and other actions. In spite of all its efforts, fascism has failed to win over politically the basic masses of the workers; it is losing even its former supporters, and will lose them more and more in the future. Nevertheless, we must realize that the workers who are convinced of the *possibility* of overthrowing the fascist dictatorship, and who are already prepared to fight for it actively, are still in the minority—they consist of us, the Communists, and the revolutionary section of the Social-Democratic workers. But the majority of the working people have not yet become aware of the real, concrete possibilities and methods of overthrowing this dictatorship, and still adopt a waiting attitude. This we must bear in mind when we outline our tasks in the struggle against fascism in Germany, and when we seek, study and apply special methods of approach for the undermining and overthrow of the fascist dictatorship in Germany.

In order to be able to strike a telling blow at the fascist dictatorship, we must first find out what is its most vulnerable point. What is the Achilles' heel of the fascist dictatorship? Its social basis. The latter is extremely heterogeneous. It is made up of various classes and various strata of society. Fascism has proclaimed itself the sole representative of all classes and strata of the population: the manufacturer and the worker, the millionaire and the unemployed, the Junker and the small peasant, the big capitalist and the artisan. It pretends to defend the interests of *all* these strata, the interests of the nation. But since it is a dictatorship of the big bourgeoisie, fascism must inevitably come into conflict with its mass social basis, all the more since, under the fascist dictatorship, the class contradictions between the pack of financial magnates and the overwhelming majority of the people are brought out in greatest relief.

We can lead the masses to a decisive struggle for the overthrow of the fascist dictatorship only by getting the workers who have been forced into the fascist organizations, or have joined them through

ignorance, to take part in the *most elementary movements* for the defence of their economic, political and cultural interests. It is for this reason that the Communists must work in these organizations, as the best champions of the day-to-day interests of the mass of members, bearing in mind that as the workers belonging to these organizations begin more and more frequently to demand their rights and defend their interests, they inevitably come into conflict with the fascist dictatorship.

In defending the urgent and, at first, the most elementary interests of the working people in town and countryside, it is comparatively easier to find a common language not only with the conscious anti-fascists, but also with those of the working people who are still supporters of fascism, but are disillusioned and dissatisfied with its policy, and are grumbling and seeking an occasion for expressing their discontent. In general we must realize that all our tactics in countries with a fascist dictatorship must be of such a character as not to repulse the rank-and-file supporters of fascism, not to throw them once more into the arms of fascism, but to deepen the gulf between the fascist leaders and the mass of disillusioned rank-and-file followers of fascism drawn from the working sections of society.

We need not be dismayed, comrades, if the people mobilized around these day-to-day interests consider themselves either indifferent to politics or even followers of fascism. The important thing for us is to draw them into the movement, which, although it may not at first proceed openly under the slogans of the struggle against fascism, is already objectively an anti-fascist movement putting these masses into opposition to the fascist dictatorship.

Experience teaches us that the view that it is *generally impossible*, in countries with a fascist dictatorship, to come out legally or semi-legally, is harmful and incorrect. To insist on this point of view means to fall into passivity, and to renounce real mass work altogether. True, under the conditions of a fascist dictatorship, to find forms and methods of legal or semi-legal action is a difficult and complex problem. But, as in many other questions, the path is indicated by life itself and by the initiative of the masses themselves, who have already provided us with a number of examples that must be generalized and applied in an organized and effective manner.

We must very resolutely put an end to the tendency to underestimate work in the fascist mass organizations. In Italy, in Germany, and in a number of other fascist countries, our comrades tried to conceal their passivity, and frequently even their direct refusal to

work in the fascist mass organizations, by putting forward work in the factories as against work in the fascist mass organizations. In reality, however, it was just this mechanical distinction which led to work being conducted very feebly, and sometimes not at all, both in the fascist mass organizations and in the factories.

Yet it is particularly important that Communists in the fascist countries should be wherever the masses are to be found. Fascism has deprived the workers of their own legal organizations. It has forced the fascist organizations upon them, and it is *there that the masses are*—by compulsion, or to some extent voluntarily. These mass fascist organizations can and must be made our legal or semi-legal field of action, where we can meet the masses. They can and must be made our legal or semi-legal starting point for the defence of the day-to-day interests of the masses. To utilize these possibilities, Communists must win elected positions in the fascist mass organizations, for contact with the masses, and must rid themselves once and for all of the prejudice that such activity is unseemly and unworthy of a revolutionary worker.

In Germany, for instance, there is a system of so-called “shop delegates.” But where is it stated that we must leave the fascists a monopoly in these organizations? Cannot we try to unite the Communist, Social-Democratic, Catholic and other anti-fascist workers in the factories so that when the list of “shop delegates” is voted upon the known agents of the employers may be struck off and other candidates, enjoying the confidence of the workers, inserted in their stead? Practice has already shown that this is possible.

And does not practice also go to show that it is possible, jointly with the Social-Democratic and other discontented workers, to demand that the “shop delegates” really defend the interests of the workers?

Take the “Labour Front” in Germany, or the fascist trade unions in Italy. Is it not possible to demand that the functionaries of the “Labour Front” be elected, and not appointed; to insist that the leading bodies of the local groups report to meetings of the members of the organizations; to address these demands, following a decision by the group, to the employer, to the “guardian of labour,” to higher bodies of the “Labour Front”? This is possible, provided the revolutionary workers actually work within the “Labour Front” and try to obtain posts in it.

Similar methods of work are possible and essential in other mass fascist organizations also—in the Hitler Youth Leagues, in the sports organizations, in the *Kraft durch Freude* organizations, in the *Doppo Lavoro* in Italy, in the cooperatives and so forth.

Comrades, you remember the ancient tale of the capture of Troy. Troy was inaccessible to the armies attacking her, thanks to her impregnable walls. And the attacking army, after suffering many sacrifices, was unable to achieve victory until with the aid of the famous Trojan horse it managed to penetrate to the very heart of the enemy's camp.

We revolutionary workers, it appears to me, should not be shy about using the same tactics with regard to our fascist foe, who is defending himself against the people with the help of a living wall of his cutthroats. (*Applause.*)

He who fails to understand the necessity of using such tactics in the case of fascism, he who regards such an approach as "humiliating," may be a most excellent comrade, but if you will allow me to say so, he is a windbag and not a revolutionary, he will be unable to lead the masses to the overthrow of the fascist dictatorship. (*Applause.*)

The mass movement for a united front, starting with defence of the most elementary needs, and changing its forms and watchwords of the struggle as the latter extends and grows, is growing up *outside and inside* the fascist organizations in Germany, Italy, and the other countries in which fascism possesses a mass basis. It will be the *battering ram* which will shatter the fortress of the fascist dictatorship that at present seems impregnable to many.

The United Front in the Countries Where the Social-Democrats are in Office

The struggle for the establishment of the united front raises also another very important problem, the problem of the united front in countries where Social-Democratic governments, or coalition governments in which Socialists participate, are in power, as, for instance, in Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Czechoslovakia and Belgium.

Our attitude of absolute opposition to Social-Democratic governments, which are governments of compromise with the bourgeoisie, is well known. But this notwithstanding, we do not regard the existence of a *Social-Democratic government* or a coalition government formed by a Social-Democratic party with bourgeois parties as an *insurmountable obstacle* for establishing a united front with the Social-Democrats on definite issues. We believe that in such a case too a united front for the defence of the vital interests of the working people and in the struggle against fascism is quite *possible* and *necessary*. It stands to reason that in countries where representatives of Social-Democratic

parties take part in the government the Social-Democratic leadership offers the strongest *resistance* to the proletarian united front. This is quite comprehensible. After all, they want to show the bourgeoisie that they, better and more skilfully than anyone else, can keep the discontented working masses under control and prevent them from falling under the influence of Communism. The fact, however, that Social-Democratic ministers are opposed to the proletarian united front can by no means justify a situation in which *the Communists do nothing to establish a united front of the proletariat.*

Our comrades in the Scandinavian countries often follow the line of least resistance, *confining themselves to propaganda exposing the Social-Democratic governments.* This is a mistake. In *Denmark*, for example, the Social-Democratic leaders have been in the government for the past ten years, and for ten years day in and day out the Communists have been reiterating that it is a bourgeois capitalist government. We have to assume that the Danish workers are acquainted with this propaganda. The fact that a considerable majority nevertheless vote for the Social-Democratic government party only goes to show that the Communists' exposure of the government by means of propaganda is *insufficient.* It does *not* prove, however, that these hundreds of thousands of workers are satisfied with all the government measures of the Social-Democratic ministers. No, they are *not satisfied* with the fact that by its so-called crisis "agreement" the Social-Democratic government assists the *big capitalists and landlords* and not the workers and poor peasants. They are not satisfied with the decree issued by the government in January 1933, which deprived the workers of the *right to strike.* They are not satisfied with the project of the Social-Democratic leadership for a dangerous *anti-democratic electoral reform* (which would considerably reduce the number of deputies). I shall hardly be in error, comrades, if I state that 99 per cent of the Danish workers *do not approve* of these political steps taken by the Social-Democratic leaders and ministers.

Is it not possible for the Communists to call upon the trade unions and Social-Democratic organizations of Denmark to discuss some of these burning issues, to express their opinions on them and come out jointly for a proletarian united front with the object of obtaining the workers' demands? In October of last year, when our Danish comrades appealed to the trade unions to act against the reduction of unemployment relief and for the democratic rights of the trade unions, about 100 local trade union organizations joined the united front.

In *Sweden* a Social-Democratic government is in power for the third time, but the Swedish Communists have for a long time abstained

from applying the united front tactics in practice. Why? Was it because they were opposed to the united front? Of course not; they were in principle for united front, for a united front *in general*, but they failed to understand in what circumstances, on what questions, in defence of what demands a proletarian united front could be successfully established, where and how to "hook on." A few months before the formation of the Social-Democratic government, the Social-Democratic Party advanced during the elections a platform containing a number of demands which would have been the very thing to include in the platform of the proletarian united front. For example, the slogans, "*Against customs duties*," "*Against militarization*," "Put an end to the policy of delay in the question of *unemployment insurance*," "*Grant adequate old age pensions*," "*Prohibit organizations like the 'Munch' corps*" (a fascist organization), "*Down with class legislation against the unions* demanded by the bourgeois parties."

Over a million of the working people of Sweden voted in 1932 for these demands advanced by the Social-Democrats, and welcomed in 1933 the formation of a Social-Democratic government in the hope that now these demands would be realized. What could have been more natural in such a situation and what would have better suited the mass of the workers than an appeal of the Communist Party to all Social-Democratic and trade union organizations to take joint action to *secure these demands advanced by the Social-Democratic Party*?

If we had succeeded in really mobilizing wide masses and in welding the Social-Democratic and Communist workers' organizations into a united front to secure these demands of the Social-Democrats themselves, there is no doubt that the *working class of Sweden* would have gained thereby. The Social-Democratic ministers of Sweden, of course, would not have been very happy over it, for in that case the government would have been compelled to meet at least some of these demands. At any rate, what has happened now, when the government instead of abolishing has *raised* some of the duties, instead of restricting militarism has enlarged the military budget, and instead of rejecting any legislation directed against the trade unions has itself introduced such a bill in Parliament, would not have happened. True, on the last issue the Communist Party of Sweden carried through a good mass campaign in the spirit of the proletarian united front, with the result that in the end even the Social-Democratic parliamentary fraction felt constrained to vote against the government bill, and for the time it has fallen through.

The *Norwegian* Communists were right in calling upon the organi-

zations of the Labour Party to organize joint May Day demonstrations and in putting forward a number of demands which in the main coincide with the demands contained in the election platform of the Norwegian Labour Party. Although this step in favour of a united front was poorly prepared and the leadership of the Norwegian Labour Party opposed it, *united front demonstrations took place in thirty localities.*

Formerly many Communists used to be afraid that it would be opportunism on their part if they did not counter every partial demand of the Social-Democrats by demands of their own which were twice as radical. That was a naive mistake. If Social-Democrats, for instance, demanded the dissolution of the fascist organizations, there was no reason why we should add: "and the disbanding of the state police" (a demand which would be expedient under different circumstances). We should rather tell the Social-Democratic workers: We are ready to accept these demands of your Party as demands of the proletarian united front and are ready to fight to the end for their realization. Let us join hands for the battle.

In *Czechoslovakia* also certain demands advanced by the Czech and German Social-Democrats, and by the reformist trade unions, can and should be utilized for establishing a united front of the working class. When the Social-Democrats, for instance, demand work for the unemployed, or the abolition of the laws restricting municipal self-government, as they have done ever since 1927, these demands should be made concrete in each locality, in each district, and a fight should be carried on hand in hand with the Social-Democratic organizations for their actual realization. Or, when the Social-Democratic Parties thunder "in general terms" against the agents of fascism in the state apparatus, the proper thing to do is in each particular district to drag into the light of day the particular local fascist spokesmen, and together with the Social-Democratic workers demand their removal from government employ.

In *Belgium* the leaders of the Socialist Party, with Emile Vandervelde at their head, have entered a coalition government. This "success" they have achieved thanks to their lengthy and extensive campaigns for two main demands: (1) *the abolition of the emergency decrees*, and (2) *the realization of the de Man plan*. The first issue is very important. The preceding government issued 150 reactionary emergency decrees, which are an extremely heavy burden on the working people. It was proposed to repeal them at once. Such was the demand of the Socialist Party. But have many of these emergency de-

crees been repealed by the new government? It has not rescinded a single one. It has only mollified somewhat a few of the emergency decrees in order to make a sort of "token payment" in settlement of the generous promises of the Belgian Socialist leaders (like that "token dollar" which some European powers proffered the U.S.A. in payment of the millions due as war debts).

As regards the realization of the widely advertised de Man plan, the matter has taken a turn quite unexpected by the Social-Democratic masses. The Socialist ministers announced that the *economic crisis must be overcome first*, and only those provisions of the de Man plan should be carried into effect which improve the position of the industrial capitalists and the banks; only afterwards would it be possible to adopt measures to improve the conditions of the workers. But *how long* must the workers wait for *their* share in the "benefits" promised them in the de Man plan? The Belgian *bankers* have already had their veritable *shower of gold*. The Belgian franc has been devaluated 28 per cent; by this manipulation the bankers were able to pocket 4,500,000,000 francs as their spoils at the expense of the wage earners and the savings of the small depositors. But how does this tally with the contents of the de Man plan? Why, if we are to believe the letter of the plan, it promises to "*prosecute monopolist abuses and speculative manipulations.*"

On the basis of the de Man plan, the government has appointed a commission to supervise the banks. But the commission *consists of bankers* who can now gaily and lightheartedly supervise themselves.

The de Man plan also promises a number of other good things, such as a "*shortening of the working day,*" "*standardization of wages,*" "*a minimum wage,*" "organization of an all-embracing system of *social insurance,*" greater convenience in living conditions through new *housing construction,*" and so forth. These are all demands which we Communists can support. We should go to the labour organizations of Belgium and say to them: The capitalists have already received enough and even too much. Let us demand that the Social-Democratic ministers now carry out the promises they made to the workers. Let us get together in a *united front for the successful defence* of our interests. Minister Vandervelde, we support the demands on behalf of the workers contained in *your* platform; but we tell you frankly that we take these demands *seriously*, that we want action and not empty words, and therefore are uniting hundreds of thousands of workers to *struggle* for these demands!

Thus, in countries having Social-Democratic governments, the Com-

munists, by utilizing suitable individual demands taken from the platforms of the Social-Democratic Parties themselves and from the election promises of the Social-Democratic ministers as the starting point for achieving joint action with the Social-Democratic Parties and organizations, can afterwards more easily develop a campaign for the establishment of a united front on the basis of other mass demands in the struggle against the capitalist offensive, against fascism and the threat of war.

It must further be borne in mind that in general joint action with the Social-Democratic Parties and organizations requires from Communists serious and substantiated criticism of Social-Democracy as the ideology and practice of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie, and untiring, comradely explanation for the Social-Democratic workers of the program and slogans of communism. In countries having Social-Democratic governments this task is of particular importance in the struggle for the united front.

The Struggle for Trade Union Unity

Comrades, a most important stage in the consolidation of the united front must be the establishment of national and international trade union unity.

As you know, the splitting tactics of the reformist leaders were applied most virulently in the trade unions. The reason for this is clear. Here their policy of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie found its practical culmination directly in the factories, to the detriment of the vital interests of the working class. This, of course, gave rise to sharp criticism and resistance on the part of the revolutionary workers under the leadership of the Communists. That is why the struggle between communism and reformism raged most fiercely in the trade unions.

The more difficult and complicated the situation became for capitalism, the more reactionary was the policy of the leaders of the Amsterdam unions¹ and the more aggressive their measures against all opposition elements within the trade unions. Even the establishment of the fascist dictatorship in Germany and the intensified capitalist offensive in all capitalist countries failed to diminish this aggressiveness. Is it not a characteristic fact that in 1933 alone most disgraceful circulars were issued in Great Britain, Holland, Belgium and Sweden, for the expulsion of Communists and revolutionary workers from the trade unions?

¹ The International Federation of Trade Unions, frequently called the Amsterdam International after the seat of its central office.—*Ed.*

In Great Britain in 1933 a circular was issued prohibiting the local branches of the trade unions from joining the anti-war or other revolutionary organizations. That was a prelude to the notorious "Black Circular" of the Trade Union Congress General Council, which outlawed any trades council admitting delegates "directly or indirectly associated with Communist organizations." What is there left to be said of the leadership of the German trade unions, which applied unprecedented repressive measures against the revolutionary elements in the trade unions?

Yet we must base our tactics, not on the behaviour of individual leaders of the Amsterdam unions, no matter what difficulties their behaviour may cause the class struggle, but primarily on the question of *where the masses of workers are to be found*. And here we must openly declare that work in the trade unions is the most vital question in the work of all Communist Parties. We must bring about a real change for the better in trade union work and make the question of struggle for trade union unity the central issue.

"What constitutes the strength of Social-Democracy in the West?" asked Comrade Stalin ten years ago. Answering this question, he said:

"The fact that it has its support in the trade unions.

"What constitutes the weakness of our Communist Parties in the West?

"The fact that they are not yet linked with the trade unions, and that certain elements within the Communist Parties do not wish to be linked with them.

"Hence, the main task of the Communist Parties of the West at the present time is to develop the campaign for unity in the trade union movement and to bring it to its consummation; to see to it that all Communists, without exception, join the trade unions, and work there systematically and patiently to strengthen the solidarity of the working class in its fight against capital, and thus attain the conditions that will enable the Communist Parties to rely upon the trade unions."¹

Has this precept of Comrade Stalin's been followed? No, comrades, it has not.

Ignoring the urge of the workers to join the trade unions, and faced with the difficulties of working within the Amsterdam unions, many of our comrades decided to pass by this complicated task. They inva-

¹ J. Stalin, *The Results of the Work of the Fourteenth Conference of the Russian Communist Party*.

riably spoke of an organizational crisis in the Amsterdam unions, of the workers deserting the unions, but failed to notice that after some decline at the beginning of the world economic crisis, these unions later began to grow again. The peculiarity of the trade union movement has been precisely the fact that the attacks of the bourgeoisie on trade union rights, the attempts in a number of countries to "coordinate" the trade unions (Poland, Hungary, etc.), the curtailment of social insurance, and the cutting of wages forced the workers, notwithstanding the lack of resistance displayed by the reformist trade union leaders, to rally still more closely around these unions, because the workers wanted and still want to see in the trade unions the militant champions of their vital class interests. This explains the fact that most of the Amsterdam unions—in France, Czechoslovakia, Belgium, Sweden, Holland, Switzerland, etc.—have grown in membership during the last few years. The American Federation of Labour has also considerably increased its membership in the past two years.

Had the German comrades better understood the problem of trade union work of which Comrade Thaelmann spoke on many occasions, there would undoubtedly have been a better situation in the trade unions than was the case at the time the fascist dictatorship was established. At the end of 1932 only about *ten per cent* of the Party members belonged to the free trade unions. This in spite of the fact that after the Sixth Congress of the Comintern the Communists took the lead in quite a number of strikes. Our comrades used to write in the press of the need to assign 90 per cent of our forces to work in the trade unions, but in reality activity was concentrated exclusively around the revolutionary trade union opposition, which actually sought to replace the trade unions. And how about the period after Hitler's seizure of power? For two years many of our comrades stubbornly and systematically opposed the correct slogan of fighting for the re-establishment of the free unions.

I could cite similar examples about almost every other capitalist country.

But we already have the first serious achievements to our credit in the struggle for trade union unity in European countries. I have in mind little Austria, where on the initiative of the Communist Party a basis has been created for an illegal trade union movement. After the February battles the Social-Democrats, with Otto Bauer at their head, issued the watchword: "The free unions can be re-established only after the downfall of fascism." The Communists applied themselves to the *task of re-establishing the trade unions*. Each phase of that work was

a bit of the living united front of the Austrian proletariat. The successful re-establishment of the free trade unions in underground conditions was a serious blow to fascism. The Social-Democrats were at the parting of the ways. Some of them tried to negotiate with the government. Others, seeing our successes, created their own parallel illegal trade unions. But there could be only one road: *either capitulation to fascism, or toward trade union unity through joint struggle against fascism.* Under mass pressure, the wavering leadership of the parallel unions created by the former trade union leaders decided to agree to amalgamation. The basis of this amalgamation is irreconcilable struggle against the offensive of capitalism and fascism and the guarantee of trade union democracy. We welcome this fact of the amalgamation of the trade unions, which is the first of its kind since the formal split of the trade unions after the war and is therefore of *international importance.*

In France the united front has unquestionably served as a mighty impetus for achieving trade union unity. The leaders of the General Confederation of Labour have hampered and still hamper in every way the realization of unity, countering the main issue of the class policy of the trade unions by raising issues of a subordinate and secondary or formal character. An unquestionable success in the struggle for trade union unity has been the establishment of *single unions* on a local scale, embracing, in the case of the railroad workers, for instance, approximately three-quarters of the membership of both trade unions.

We are definitely for the re-establishment of *trade union unity in each country and on an international scale. We are for one union in each industry.*

We are for one federation of trade unions in each country. We are for single international federations of trade unions organized according to industries.

We stand for one international of trade unions based on the class struggle. We are for united class trade unions as one of the major bulwarks of the working class against the offensive of capital and fascism. Our only condition for uniting the trade unions is: Struggle against capital, against fascism and for internal trade union democracy.

Time does not wait. To us the question of trade union unity on a national as well as international scale is a question of the great task of uniting our class in mighty, single trade union organizations against the class enemy.

We welcome the fact that on the eve of May First of this year the Red International of Labour Unions addressed the Amsterdam International with the proposal to consider jointly the question of the terms,

methods and forms of uniting the world trade union movement. The leaders of the Amsterdam International rejected that proposal, using the outworn pretext that unity in the trade union movement is possible only within the Amsterdam International, which, by the way, includes trade unions in only a part of the European countries.

But the Communists working in the trade unions must continue to struggle tirelessly for the unity of the trade union movement. The task of the Red trade unions and the R.I.L.U. is to do all in their power to hasten the achievement of a joint struggle of all trade unions against the offensive of capital and fascism, and to bring about unity in the trade union movement, despite the stubborn resistance of the reactionary leaders of the Amsterdam International. The Red trade unions and the R.I.L.U. must receive our unstinted support along this line.

In countries where small Red trade unions exist, we recommend working for their inclusion in the big reformist unions, but demanding the right to defend their views and the reinstatement of expelled members. But in countries where big Red trade unions exist parallel with big reformist trade unions, we must work for the convening of *unity congresses* on the basis of a platform of struggle against the capitalist offensive and the guarantee of *trade union democracy*.

It should be stated categorically that any Communist worker, any revolutionary worker who does not belong to the mass trade union of his industry, who does not fight to transform the reformist trade union into a real class trade union organization, who does not fight for trade union unity on the basis of the class struggle, such a Communist worker, such a revolutionary worker, does not discharge his elementary proletarian duty. (*Applause.*)

The United Front and the Youth

Comrades, I have already pointed out the role played in the victory of fascism by the drawing of the youth into the fascist organizations. In speaking of the youth, we must state frankly that we have neglected our task of drawing the masses of the working youth into the struggle against the offensive of capital, against fascism and the danger of war; we have neglected this task in a number of countries. We have underestimated the enormous importance of the youth in the fight against fascism. We have not always taken into account the special economic, political and cultural interests of the youth. We have likewise not paid proper attention to revolutionary education of the youth.

All this has been utilized very cleverly by fascism, which in some

countries, particularly in Germany, has inveigled large sections of the youth onto the anti-proletarian road. It should be borne in mind that it is not only by the glamour of militarism that fascism entices the youth. It feeds and clothes some of them in its detachments, gives work to others, and even sets up so-called cultural institutions for the youth, trying in this way to imbue them with the idea that it really can and wants to feed, clothe, teach and provide work for the mass of working youth.

In a number of capitalist countries our Young Communist Leagues are still mainly sectarian organizations divorced from the masses. Their fundamental weakness is that they still try to copy the Communist Parties, to copy their forms and methods of work, forgetting that the Y.C.L. is *not a Communist Party of the youth*. They do not take sufficient account of the fact that it is an organization with its own special tasks. Its methods and forms of work, education and struggle must be adapted to the actual level and needs of the youth.

Our Young Communists have shown memorable examples of heroism in the fight against fascist violence and bourgeois reaction. But they still lack the ability to win the masses of the youth away from hostile influences by dint of stubborn, concrete work, as is evident from the fact that they have not yet overcome their opposition to work in the fascist mass organizations, and that their approach to the Socialist youth and other non-Communist youth is not always correct.

A great part of the responsibility for all this must be borne, of course, by the Communist Parties as well, for they ought to lead and support the Y.C.L. in its work. For the problem of the youth is not only a Y.C.L. problem. *It is a problem for the whole Communist movement*. In the struggle for the youth, the Communist Parties and the Y.C.L. organizations must effect a genuine decisive change. The main task of the Communist youth movement in capitalist countries is to advance boldly in the direction of bringing about the *united front*, along the path of organizing and uniting the young generation of working people. The tremendous influence that even the first steps taken in this direction exert on the revolutionary movement of the youth is shown by the examples of *France* and the *United States* during the recent past. It was sufficient in these countries to proceed to apply the united front for considerable successes to be immediately achieved. In the sphere of the international united front, the successful initiative of the committee against war and fascism in Paris in bringing about the international cooperation of all *non-fascist* youth organizations is also worthy of note in this connection.

These recent successful steps in the united front movement of the youth also show that the forms which the united front of the youth should assume must not be stereotyped, nor necessarily be the same as those met with in the practice of the Communist Parties. The Young Communist Leagues must strive in every way to unite the forces of all non-fascist mass organizations of the youth, including the formation of various kinds of common organizations for the struggle against fascism, against the unprecedented manner in which the youth is being stripped of every right, against the militarization of the youth and for the economic and cultural rights of the young generation, in order to draw these young workers over to the side of the anti-fascist front, no matter where they may be—in the factories, the forced labour camps, the labour exchanges, the army barracks and the fleet, the schools, or in the various sports, cultural or other organizations.

In developing and strengthening the Y.C.L., our Y.C.L. members must work for the formation of anti-fascist associations of the Communist and Socialist Youth Leagues on a platform of class struggle.

Women and the United Front

Comrades, nor has work among working women—among women workers, unemployed women, peasant women and housewives—been underestimated any less than work among the youth. While fascism exacts most of all from youth, it enslaves women with particular ruthlessness and cynicism, playing on the innermost feelings of the mother, the housewife, the single working woman, uncertain of the morrow. Fascism, posing as a benefactor, throws the starving family a few beggarly scraps, trying in this way to stifle the bitterness aroused, particularly among the labouring women, by the unprecedented slavery which fascism brings them. It drives working women out of industry, forcibly sends needy girls into the country, dooming them to the position of unpaid servants of rich farmers and landlords. While promising women a happy home and family life, it drives women to prostitution more than any other capitalist regime.

Communists, above all our women Communists, must remember that there cannot be a successful fight against fascism and war unless the wide masses of women are drawn into the struggle. Agitation alone will not accomplish this. Taking into account the concrete situation in each instance, we must find a way of mobilizing the mass of women by work around their vital interests and demands—in a fight for their demands against high prices, for higher wages on the basis of the principle of

equal pay for equal work, against mass dismissals, against every manifestation of inequality in the status of women and against fascist enslavement.

In endeavouring to draw women who work into the revolutionary movement, we must not be afraid of forming separate women's organizations for this purpose, wherever necessary. The preconceived notion that the women's organizations under Communist Party leadership in the capitalist countries must be liquidated, as part of the struggle against "women's separatism" in the labour movement, has often done great harm.

It is necessary to seek out the simplest and most flexible forms, in order to establish contact and bring about cooperation in struggle between the revolutionary, Social-Democratic and progressive anti-fascist women's organizations. We must spare no pains to see that the women workers and working women in general fight shoulder to shoulder with their class brothers in the ranks of the united working-class front and the anti-fascist People's Front.

The Anti-Imperialist United Front

The changed international and internal situation lends exceptional importance to the question of the *anti-imperialist* united front in all colonial and semi-colonial countries.

In forming a wide anti-imperialist united front of struggle in the colonies and semi-colonies it is necessary above all to recognize the variety of conditions in which the anti-imperialist struggle of the masses is proceeding, the varying degree of maturity of the national liberation movement, the role of the proletariat within it and the influence of the Communist Party over the masses.

In Brazil the problem differs from that in India, China, etc.

In *Brazil* the Communist Party, having laid a correct foundation for the development of the united anti-imperialist front by the establishment of the National Liberation Alliance, must make every effort to extend this front by drawing into it first and foremost the many millions of the peasantry, leading up to the formation of units of a people's revolutionary army, completely devoted to the revolution and to the establishment of the rule of the National Liberation Alliance.

In *India* the Communists must support, extend and participate in all anti-imperialist mass activities, not excluding those which are under national reformist leadership. While maintaining their political and organizational independence, they must carry on active work inside the organizations which take part in the Indian National Congress, facili-

tating the process of crystallization of a national revolutionary wing among them, for the purpose of further developing the national liberation movement of the Indian peoples against British imperialism.

In *China*, where the people's movement has already led to the formation of Soviet districts over a considerable territory of the country and to the organization of a powerful Red Army, the predatory attack of Japanese imperialism and the treason of the Nanking government have brought into jeopardy the national existence of the great Chinese people. The Chinese Soviets act as a unifying centre in the struggle against the enslavement and partition of China by the imperialists, as a unifying centre which will rally all anti-imperialist forces for the national defence of the Chinese people.

We therefore approve the initiative taken by our courageous brother Party of China in the creation of a most extensive anti-imperialist united front against Japanese imperialism and its Chinese agents, jointly with all those organized forces existing on the territory of China which are ready to wage a real struggle for the salvation of their country and their people.

I am sure that I express the sentiments and thoughts of our entire Congress in saying that we send our warmest fraternal greetings, in the name of the revolutionary proletariat of the whole world, to all the Soviets of China, to the Chinese revolutionary people. (*Loud applause; all rise.*) We send our ardent fraternal greetings to the heroic Red Army of China, tried in a thousand battles. (*Loud applause.*) And we assure the Chinese people of our firm resolve to support its struggle for its complete liberation from all imperialist robbers and their Chinese henchmen. (*Loud applause; all rise. The ovation lasts several minutes. Cheers from all delegates.*)

On the United Front Government

Comrades, we have taken a bold, resolute course toward the united front of the working class, and are ready to carry it out with full consistency.

If we Communists are asked whether we advocate the united front *only* in the fight for partial demands, or whether we are prepared to share the responsibility even when it will be a question of forming a *government* on the basis of the united front, then we say with a full sense of our responsibility: Yes, we recognize that a situation may arise in which the formation of a *government of the proletarian united front*, or of an *anti-fascist People's Front*, will become not only possible but necessary in the interests of the proletariat. (*Applause.*) And in that

case we shall declare for the formation of such a government without the slightest hesitation.

I am not speaking here of a government which may be formed *after* the victory of the proletarian revolution. It is not impossible, of course, that in some country, immediately after the revolutionary overthrow of the bourgeoisie, there may be formed a Soviet government on the basis of a government bloc of the Communist Party with a definite party (or its Left wing) participating in the revolution. After the October Revolution the victorious Party of the Russian Bolsheviks, as we know, included representatives of the Left Socialist-Revolutionaries in the Soviet government. This was a specific feature of the first Soviet government after the victory of the October Revolution.

I am not speaking of such a case, but of the possible formation of a united front government on the eve of and before the victory of the Soviet revolution.

What kind of government is this? And in what situation could there be any question of such a government?

It is primarily a *government of struggle against fascism and reaction*. It must be a government arising as the result of the united front movement and in no way restricting the activity of the Communist Party and the mass organizations of the working class, but, on the contrary, taking resolute measures against the counter-revolutionary financial magnates and their fascist agents.

At a suitable moment, relying on the growing united front movement, the Communist Party of a given country will declare for the formation of such a government on the basis of a definite anti-fascist platform.

Under what objective conditions will it be possible to form such a government? In the most general terms, one can reply to this question as follows: under conditions of *political crisis*, when the ruling classes are no longer able to cope with the powerful rise of the mass anti-fascist movement. But this is only a general perspective, without which it will scarcely be possible in practice to form a united front government. Only the existence of definite *special prerequisites* can put on the order of the day the question of forming such a government as a politically *essential* task. It seems to me that the following prerequisites deserve the greatest attention in this connection:

First, the state apparatus of the bourgeoisie must already be sufficiently *disorganized* and *paralyzed*, so that the bourgeoisie cannot prevent the formation of a government of struggle against reaction and fascism.

Second, the widest masses of working people, particularly the mass trade unions, must be in a state of vehement revolt *against fascism and reaction, though not ready to rise in insurrection so as to fight under Communist Party leadership for the achievement of Soviet power.*

Third, the differentiation and radicalization in the ranks of Social-Democracy and other parties participating in the united front must already have reached the point where a considerable proportion of them demand *ruthless measures against the fascists and other reactionaries*, struggle together with the Communists against fascism, and openly come out against that reactionary section of their own party which is hostile to communism.

When and in what countries a situation will actually arise in which these prerequisites will be present in a sufficient degree, it is impossible to state in advance. But as such a possibility *is not to be ruled out in any of the capitalist countries* we must reckon with it, and not only orientate and prepare ourselves but also orientate the working class accordingly.

The fact that we are bringing up this question for discussion at all today is, of course, connected with our estimate of the situation and immediate prospects, as well as with the actual growth of the united front movement in a number of countries during the recent past. For more than ten years the situation in the capitalist countries was such that it was not necessary for the Communist International to discuss a question of this kind.

You remember, comrades, that at our Fourth Congress, in 1922, and again at the Fifth Congress, in 1924, the question of the slogan of a *workers'*, or a *workers' and peasants' government* was under discussion. Originally the issue turned essentially upon a question which was almost comparable to the one we are discussing today. The debates that took place at that time in the Communist International around this question, and in particular the political *errors* which were committed in connection with it, have to this day retained their importance for *sharpening our vigilance against the danger of deviations to the Right or "Left" from the Bolshevik line on this question.* Therefore I shall briefly point to a few of these errors, in order to draw from them the lessons necessary for the present policy of our Parties.

The *first* series of mistakes arose from the fact that the question of a workers' government was not clearly and firmly bound up with the existence of a political crisis. Owing to this the Right opportunists were able to interpret matters as though we should strive for the formation of a workers' government, supported by the Communist Party,

in any, so to speak, "normal" situation. The ultra-Lefts, on the other hand, recognized only a workers' government formed by armed insurrection, *after* the overthrow of the bourgeoisie. Both views were wrong. In order, therefore, to avoid a repetition of such mistakes, we now lay *great stress on the exact consideration* of the specific, concrete circumstances of the political crisis and the upsurge of the mass movement, in which the formation of a united front government may prove possible and politically necessary.

The *second* series of errors arose from the fact that the question of a workers' government was not bound up with the development of a militant mass *united front movement of the proletariat*. Thus the *Right* opportunists were able to distort the question, reducing it to the unprincipled tactics of forming blocs with Social-Democratic Parties on the basis of purely parliamentary arrangements. The *ultra-Lefts*, on the other hand, shouted: "No coalitions with the counter-revolutionary Social-Democrats!", regarding all Social-Democrats as counter-revolutionaries at bottom.

Both were wrong, and we now emphasize, on the one hand, that we are not in the least anxious for a "workers' government" that would be nothing more or less than an enlarged Social-Democratic government. We even prefer not to use the term "workers' governments," and *speak of a united front government*, which in political character is something absolutely different, *different in principle*, from all the Social-Democratic governments which usually call themselves "workers' (or labour) governments." While the Social-Democratic government is an instrument of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie in the interests of the preservation of the capitalist order, *a united front government* is an instrument of the collaboration of the revolutionary vanguard of the proletariat with other anti-fascist parties, in the interests of the entire working population, a government of struggle against fascism and reaction. Obviously there is a *radical difference* between these two things.

On the other hand, we stress the need to see *the difference between the two different camps of Social-Democracy*. As I have already pointed out, there is a reactionary camp of Social-Democracy, but alongside of it there exists and is growing the camp of the Left Social-Democrats (without quotation marks), of workers who are becoming revolutionary. In practice the decisive difference between them consists in their attitude to the united front of the working class. The reactionary Social-Democrats are *against* the united front; they slander the united front movement, they sabotage and disintegrate it, as it undermines their pol-

icy of compromise with the bourgeoisie. The Left Social-Democrats are *for the united front*; they defend, develop and strengthen the united front movement. Inasmuch as this united front movement is a militant movement against fascism and reaction, it will be a constant driving force, impelling the united front government to struggle against the reactionary bourgeoisie. The more powerful this mass movement develops, the greater the force which it can offer to the government to combat the reactionaries. And the better this mass movement will be organized *from below*, the wider the network of *non-partisan class organs of the united front in the factories*, among the unemployed, in the workers' districts, among the *small people of town and country*, the greater will be the guarantee against a possible degeneration of the policy of the united front government.

The *third* series of mistaken views which came to light during our former debates touched precisely on the *practical policy* of the "*workers' government*." The Right opportunists considered that a "workers' government" ought to keep "within the framework of bourgeois democracy," and consequently ought not to take any steps going beyond this framework. The ultra-Lefts, on the other hand, in practice refused to make any attempt to form a united front government.

In 1923 Saxony and Thuringia presented a clear picture of a Right opportunist "workers' government" in action. The entry of the Communists into the government of Saxony jointly with the Left Social-Democrats (Zeigner group) was no mistake in itself; on the contrary, the revolutionary situation in Germany fully justified this step. But in taking part in the government, the Communists should have used their positions primarily *for the purpose of arming the proletariat*. This they did not do. They did not even requisition a single apartment of the rich, although the housing shortage among the workers was so great that many of them with their wives and children were still without a roof over their heads. They also did *nothing* to organize the revolutionary mass movement of the workers. They behaved in general like *ordinary* parliamentary ministers "within the framework of bourgeois democracy." As you know, this was the result of the opportunist policy of Brandler and his adherents. The result was such bankruptcy that to this day we have to refer to the government of Saxony as the classical example of how revolutionaries should *not* behave when in office.

Comrades, we demand an entirely different policy from any united front government. We demand that it should carry out definite and *fundamental revolutionary demands* required by the situation. For

instance, control of production, control of the banks, disbanding of the police and its replacement by an armed workers' militia, etc.

Fifteen years ago Lenin called upon us to focus all our attention on "searching out forms of *transition* or *approach* to the proletarian revolution." It may be that in a number of countries the *united front government* will prove to be *one* of the most important transitional forms. "Left" doctrinaires have always avoided this precept of Lenin's. Like the limited propagandists that they were, they spoke only of "aims," without ever worrying about "forms of transition." The Right opportunists, on the other hand, have tried to establish a special "democratic intermediate stage" lying between the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie and the dictatorship of the proletariat, for the purpose of instilling into the workers the illusion of a peaceful parliamentary passage from the one dictatorship to the other. This fictitious "intermediate stage" they have also called "transitional form," and even quoted Lenin's words! But this piece of swindling was not difficult to expose: for Lenin spoke of the form of transition and approach to the "*proletarian revolution*," that is, to the overthrow of the bourgeois dictatorship, and *not* of some transitional form *between* the bourgeois and the proletarian dictatorship.

Why did Lenin attach such exceptionally great importance to the form of transition to the proletarian revolution? Because he had in mind "*the fundamental law of all great revolutions*," the law that for the masses propaganda and agitation alone cannot take the place of *their own political experience*, when it is a question of attracting really wide masses of the working people to the side of the revolutionary vanguard, without which a victorious struggle for power is impossible. It is a common mistake of a "Leftist" character to imagine that as soon as a political (or revolutionary) crisis arises, it is enough for the Communist leaders to put forth the slogan of revolutionary insurrection, and the wide masses will follow them. No, even in such a crisis the masses are by no means always ready to do so. We saw this in the case of *Spain*. To help the *millions* to master as rapidly as possible, through their own experience, what they have to do, where to find a radical solution, and what party is worthy of their confidence—these among others are the purposes for which both transitional slogans and special "forms of transition or approach to the proletarian revolution" are necessary. Otherwise the great mass of the people, who are under the influence of party-bourgeois democratic illusions and traditions, may waver even when there is a revolutionary

situation, may procrastinate and stray, without finding the road to revolution—and then come under the axe of the fascist executioners.

That is why we indicate the possibility of forming an anti-fascist united front government in the conditions of a political crisis. In so far as such a government will really prosecute the struggle against the enemies of the people, and give a free hand to the working class and the Communist Party, we Communists shall accord it our unstinted support, and as soldiers of the revolution shall take our place in the *first line of fire*. But we state frankly to the masses:

Final salvation this government cannot bring. It is not in a position to overthrow the class rule of the exploiters, and for this reason cannot finally remove the danger of fascist counter-revolution. Consequently it is necessary to *prepare for the socialist revolution!* Soviet power and *only* Soviet power can bring salvation!

In estimating the present development of the world situation, we see that a *political crisis* is maturing in quite a number of countries. This makes a firm decision by our Congress on the question of a united front government a matter of great urgency and importance.

If our parties are able to utilize in a Bolshevik fashion the opportunity of forming a united front government and of waging the struggle for formation and maintenance in power of such a government, *for the revolutionary training of the masses*, this will be *the best political justification* of our policy in favour of the formation of united front governments.

The Ideological Struggle Against Fascism

One of the weakest aspects of the anti-fascist struggle of our Parties is that they *react inadequately and too slowly to the demagogy of fascism*, and to this day continue to neglect the problems of the struggle against fascist ideology. Many comrades did not believe that so reactionary a variety of bourgeois ideology as the ideology of fascism, which in its stupidity frequently reaches the point of lunacy, was capable of gaining a mass influence at all. This was a great mistake. The putrefaction of capitalism penetrates to the innermost core of its ideology and culture, while the desperate situation of wide masses of the people renders certain sections of them susceptible to infection from the ideological refuse of this putrefaction.

Under no circumstances must we underrate fascism's power of ideological infection. On the contrary, we for our part must develop an extensive ideological struggle based on clear, popular arguments

and a correct, well thought out approach to the peculiarities of the national psychology of the masses of the people.

The fascists are rummaging through the entire history of every nation so as to be able to pose as the heirs and continuators of all that was exalted and heroic in its past, while all that was degrading or offensive to the national sentiments of the people they make use of as weapons against the enemies of fascism. Hundreds of books are being published in Germany with only one aim—to falsify the history of the German people and give it a fascist complexion.

The new-baked National-Socialist historians try to depict the history of Germany as if for the past two thousand years, by virtue of some historical law, a certain line of development had run through it like a red thread, leading to the appearance on the historical scene of a national "saviour," a "Messiah," of the German people, a certain "Corporal" of Austrian extraction! In these books the greatest figures of the German people of the past are represented as having been fascists, while the great peasant movements are set down as the direct precursors of the fascist movement.

Mussolini makes every effort to make capital for himself out of the heroic figure of Garibaldi. The French fascists bring to the fore as their heroine Joan of Arc. The American fascists appeal to the traditions of the American War of Independence, the traditions of Washington and Lincoln. The Bulgarian fascists make use of the national liberation movement of the seventies and its heroes beloved by the people, Vassil Levsky, Stephen Karaj and others.

Communists who suppose that all this has nothing to do with the cause of the working class, who do nothing to enlighten the masses on the past of their people, in a historically correct fashion, in a genuinely Marxist, a Leninist-Marxist, a Leninist-Stalinist spirit, who do nothing to link up the present struggle with the people's revolutionary traditions and past—voluntarily hand over to the fascist falsifiers all that is valuable in the historical past of the nation, that the fascists may dupe the masses. (*Applause.*)

No, comrades, we are concerned with every important question, not only of the present and the future, but also of the past of our own peoples. We Communists do not pursue a narrow policy based on the craft interests of the workers. We are not narrow-minded trade union functionaries, or leaders of mediæval guilds of handicraftsmen and journeymen. We are the representatives of the class interests of the most important, the greatest class of modern society—the working class, to whose destiny it falls to free mankind from the sufferings of

the capitalist system, the class which in one-sixth of the world has already cast off the yoke of capitalism and constitutes the ruling class. We defend the vital interests of all the exploited, toiling strata, that is, of the overwhelming majority in any capitalist country.

We Communists are the *irreconcilable opponents, on principle*, of bourgeois nationalism in all its forms. But we are *not supporters of national nihilism*, and should never act as such. The task of educating the workers and all working people in the spirit of proletarian internationalism is one of the fundamental tasks of every Communist Party. But anyone who thinks that this permits him, or even compels him, to sneer at all the national sentiments of the wide masses of working people is far from being a genuine Bolshevik, and has understood nothing of the teaching of Lenin and Stalin on the national question. (*Applause.*)

Lenin, who always fought bourgeois nationalism resolutely and consistently, gave us an example of the correct approach to the problem of national sentiments in his article "On the National Pride of the Great Russians," written in 1914. He wrote:

"Are we class-conscious Great-Russian proletarians impervious to the feeling of national pride? Certainly not! We love our language and our motherland; we, more than any other group, are working to raise *its* labouring masses (*i.e.*, nine-tenths of *its* population) to the level of intelligent democrats and Socialists. We, more than anybody, are grieved to see and feel to what violence, oppression and mockery our beautiful motherland is being subjected by the tsarist hangmen, the nobles and the capitalists. We are proud of the fact that those acts of violence met with resistance in our midst, in the midst of the Great Russians; that *this midst* advanced Radischev, the Decembrists, the déclassé revolutionaries of the 'seventies; that in 1905 the Great-Russian working class created a powerful revolutionary party of the masses.... We are filled with national pride because of the knowledge that the Great-Russian nation, *too*, has created a revolutionary class; that it, *too*, has proven capable of giving humanity great examples of struggle for freedom and for socialism; that its contribution is not confined solely to great pogroms, numerous scaffolds, torture chambers, great famines and great servility before the priests, the tsars, the landowners and the capitalists.

"We are filled with national pride, and therefore we *particularly* hate *our* slavish past... and our slavish present, in which the same

landowners, aided by the capitalists, lead us into war to stifle Poland and the Ukraine, to throttle the democratic movement in Persia and in China, to strengthen the gang of Romanovs, Bobrinskys, Purishkeviches that cover with shame our Great-Russian national dignity.”¹

This is what Lenin wrote on national pride.

I think, comrades, that when the fascists, at the Leipzig trial, attempted to slander the Bulgarians as a barbarian people, I was not wrong in taking up the defence of the national honour of the working masses of the Bulgarian people, who are struggling heroically against the fascist usurpers, the real barbarians and savages (*stormy and continued applause*), nor was I wrong in declaring that I had no cause to be ashamed of being a Bulgarian, but that, on the contrary, I was proud of being a son of the heroic Bulgarian working class. (*Applause.*)

Comrades, proletarian internationalism must, so to speak, “acclimatize itself” in each country in order to sink deep roots in its native land. *National forms* of the proletarian class struggle and of the labour movement in the individual countries are in no contradiction to proletarian internationalism; on the contrary, it is precisely in these forms that the *international interests* of the proletariat can be successfully defended.

It goes without saying that it is necessary *everywhere and on all occasions* to expose before the masses and prove to them concretely that the fascist bourgeoisie, on the pretext of defending general national interests, is conducting its egotistical policy of oppressing and exploiting its own people, as well as robbing and enslaving other nations. But we must not *confine ourselves* to this. We must at the same time prove by the very struggle of the working class and the actions of the Communist Parties that the proletariat, in rising against every manner of bondage and national oppression, is the *only* true fighter for national freedom and the independence of the people.

The interests of the class struggle of the proletariat against its native exploiters and oppressors are not in contradiction to the interests of a free and happy future of the nation. On the contrary, the socialist revolution will signify the *salvation of the nation* and will open up to it the road to loftier heights. By *the very fact* of building at the present time its class organizations and consolidating its positions, by the very fact of defending democratic rights and liberties against

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Russian edition, Vol. XVIII.

fascism, by the very fact of fighting for the overthrow of capitalism, the working class is fighting for the future of the nation.

The revolutionary proletariat is fighting to save the culture of the people, to liberate it from the shackles of decaying monopoly capitalism, from barbarous fascism, which is laying violent hands on it. *Only* the proletarian revolution can avert the destruction of culture and raise it to its highest flowering as a truly national culture—*national in form and socialist in content*—which, under *Stalin's* leadership, is being realized in the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics before our very eyes. (*Applause.*)

Proletarian internationalism not only is not in contradiction to this struggle of the working people of the individual countries for national, social and cultural freedom, but, thanks to international proletarian solidarity and fighting unity, assures the *support* that is necessary for victory in this struggle. The working class in the capitalist countries can triumph *only in closest alliance* with the victorious proletariat of the great Soviet Union. *Only* by struggling hand in hand with the proletariat of the imperialist countries can the colonial peoples and oppressed national minorities achieve their freedom. The sole road to victory for the proletarian revolution in the imperialist countries lies through the revolutionary alliance of the working class of the imperialist countries with the national liberation movement in the colonies and dependent countries, because, as Marx taught us, "no nation can be free if it oppresses other nations."

Communists belonging to an oppressed, dependent nation cannot combat chauvinism successfully among the people of their own nation if they *do not at the same time show* in practice, in the mass movement, that they actually struggle for the liberation of their nation from the alien yoke. And again, on the other hand, the Communists of an oppressing nation cannot do what is necessary to educate the working masses of their nation in the spirit of internationalism *without waging* a resolute struggle against the oppressor policy of their "own" bourgeoisie, for the right of complete self-determination for the nations kept in bondage by it. If they do not do this, they likewise do not make it easier for the working people of the oppressed nation to overcome their nationalist prejudices.

If we act in this spirit, if in all our mass work we prove convincingly that we are free of both national nihilism and bourgeois nationalism, then and only then shall we be able to wage a really successful struggle against the jingo demagoguery of the fascists.

That is the reason why a correct and practical application of the

Leninist-Stalinist national policy is of such paramount importance. It is *unquestionably an essential* preliminary condition for a successful struggle against chauvinism—this main instrument of ideological influence of the fascists upon the masses. (*Applause.*)

III. CONSOLIDATION OF THE COMMUNIST PARTIES AND THE STRUGGLE FOR POLITICAL UNITY OF THE PROLETARIAT

Comrades, in the struggle to establish the united front the importance of the leading role of the Communist Party increases extraordinarily. Only the Communist Party is at bottom the initiator, the organizer and the driving force of the united front of the working class.

The Communist Parties can ensure the mobilization of the widest masses of working people for a united struggle against fascism and the offensive of capital *only if they strengthen their own ranks in every respect*, if they develop their initiative, pursue a Marxist-Leninist policy and apply correct, flexible tactics which take into account the actual situation and alignment of class forces.

Consolidation of the Communist Parties

In the period between the Sixth and Seventh Congresses, our Parties in the capitalist countries have undoubtedly *grown in stature and have been considerably steeled*. But it would be a most dangerous mistake to rest content with this achievement. The more the united front of the working class extends, the more will new, complex problems rise before us and the more will it be necessary for us to work on the political and organizational consolidation of our Parties. The united front of the proletariat brings to the fore an army of workers who will be able to carry out their mission if this army is headed by a leading force which will point out its aims and paths. This leading force can *only be a strong proletarian, revolutionary party*.

If we Communists exert every effort to establish a united front, we do this not for the narrow purpose of recruiting new members for the Communist Parties. But we must strengthen the Communist Parties in every way and increase their membership *for the very reason* that we seriously want to strengthen the united front. The strengthening of the Communist Parties is not a narrow Party concern but the concern of the entire working class.

The unity, revolutionary solidarity and fighting preparedness of the Communist Parties constitute most valuable capital which belongs not only to us but to the whole working class. We have combined and

shall continue to combine our readiness to march jointly with the Social-Democratic Parties and organizations to the struggle against fascism with an irreconcilable struggle against Social-Democracy as the ideology and practice of compromise with the bourgeoisie, and consequently also against any *penetration* of this ideology into our own ranks.

In boldly and resolutely carrying out the policy of the united front, we meet in our own ranks with obstacles which we must remove at all costs in the shortest possible time.

After the Sixth Congress of the Communist International, a *successful struggle was waged* in all Communist Parties of the capitalist countries *against any tendency toward an opportunist adaptation to the conditions of capitalist stabilization and against any infection with reformist and legalist illusions*. Our Parties purged their ranks of various kinds of Right opportunists, thus strengthening their Bolshevik unity and fighting capacity. Less successful, and frequently entirely lacking, was the fight against *sectarianism*. Sectarianism no longer manifested itself in primitive, open forms, as in the first years of the existence of the Communist International, but, under cover of a formal recognition of the Bolshevik theses, hindered the development of a Bolshevik mass policy. In our day this is often no longer an "*infantile disorder*," as Lenin wrote, but a *deeply rooted vice*, which must be shaken off or it will be impossible to solve the problem of establishing the united front of the proletariat and of leading the masses from the positions of reformism to the side of revolution.

In the present situation sectarianism, *self-satisfied* sectarianism, as we designate it in the draft resolution, *more than anything else* impedes our struggle for the realization of the united front: sectarianism, satisfied with its *doctrinaire narrowness*, its divorce from the real life of the masses; satisfied with its *simplified methods* of solving the most complex problems of the working-class movement on the basis of stereotyped schemes; sectarianism, which professes to know all and considers it superfluous to learn from the masses, from the lessons of the labour movement. In short, sectarianism, to which, as they say, mountains are mere stepping-stones. Self-satisfied sectarianism *will not and cannot* understand that the leadership of the working class by the Communist Party does not come of itself. The leading role of the Communist Party in the struggles of the working class must be won. For this purpose it is necessary, not to rant about the leading role of the Communists, but to *merit and win the confidence of the working masses* by everyday mass work and

correct policy. This will be possible only if in our political work we Communists seriously take into account the actual level of the class consciousness of the masses, the degree to which they have become revolutionized, if we soberly appraise the actual situation, not on the basis of our wishes but on the basis of the actual state of affairs. Patiently, step by step, we must make it easier for the broad masses to come over to the Communist position. We ought never to forget the words of Lenin, who warns us as strongly as possible:

“... this is the whole point—we must *not* regard that which is obsolete *for us* as obsolete *for the class*, as obsolete *for the masses*.¹

Is it not a fact, comrades, that in our ranks there are still not a few such doctrinaire elements, who at all times and places sense nothing but danger in the policy of the united front? For such comrades the whole united front is one unrelieved peril. But this sectarian “sticking to principle” is nothing but political helplessness in face of the difficulties of directly leading the struggle of the masses.

Sectarianism finds expression *particularly* in overestimating the revolutionization of the masses, in overestimating the speed at which they are abandoning the positions of reformism, and in attempting to leap over difficult stages and the complicated tasks of the movement. In practice, methods of leading the masses have frequently been replaced by the methods of leading a narrow party group. The strength of the traditional connection between the masses and their organizations and leaders was underestimated, and when the masses did not break off these connections immediately the attitude taken toward them was just as harsh as that adopted toward their reactionary leaders. Tactics and slogans have tended to become stereotyped for all countries, the special features of the actual situation in each individual country being left out of account. The necessity of stubborn struggle in the very midst of the masses themselves to win their confidence has been ignored, the struggle for the partial demands of the workers and work in the reformist trade unions and fascist mass organizations have been neglected. The policy of the united front has frequently been replaced by bare appeals and abstract propaganda.

In no less a degree have sectarian views hindered the correct selection of people, the training and developing of *cadres connected with the masses, enjoying the confidence* of the masses, cadres whose

¹ V. I. Lenin, “*Left-Wing*” Communism, *An Infantile Disorder*.

revolutionary mettle has been *tried* and *tested* in class battles, cadres capable of combining the *practical experience of mass work with the staunchness of principle of a Bolshevik*.

Thus sectarianism has to a considerable extent retarded the growth of the Communist Parties, made it difficult to carry out a real mass policy, prevented our taking advantage of the difficulties of the class enemy to strengthen the positions of the revolutionary movement, and hindered the winning over of the wide mass of the proletariat to the side of the Communist Parties.

While fighting most resolutely to overcome and exterminate the last remnants of self-satisfied sectarianism, we must increase in every way our vigilance toward *Right opportunism and the struggle against it and against every one of its concrete manifestations*, bearing in mind that the danger of Right opportunism will increase in proportion as the wide united front develops. Already there are tendencies to reduce the role of the Communist Party in the ranks of the united front and to effect a reconciliation with Social-Democratic ideology. Nor must we lose sight of the fact that the tactics of the united front are a method of clearly convincing the Social-Democratic workers of the correctness of the Communist policy and the incorrectness of the reformist policy, and *that they are not a reconciliation with Social-Democratic ideology and practice*. A successful struggle to establish the united front imperatively demands constant struggle in our ranks against tendencies to *depreciate the role of the Party*, against *legalist illusions*, against reliance on *spontaneity and automatism*, both in liquidating fascism and in conducting the united front against the *slightest vacillation at the moment of decisive action*.

"It is necessary," Stalin teaches us, "that the Party be able to combine in its work the greatest adhesion to principle (not to be confused with sectarianism!) with a maximum of contacts and connections with the masses (not to be confused with "tailism"!), without which it is impossible for the Party not only to teach the masses but also to learn from them, not only to lead the masses and raise them to the level of the Party, but to listen to the voice of the masses and divine their sorest needs." (J. Stalin, "The Perspective of the Communist Party of Germany and its Bolshevization. *Pravda*, February 3, 1925.)

Political Unity of the Working Class

Comrades, the development of the united front of joint struggle of the Communist and Social-Democratic workers against fascism and the offensive of capital likewise brings to the fore the question of *political unity, of a single political mass party of the working class*. The Social-Democratic workers are becoming more and more convinced by experience that the struggle against the class enemy demands unity of political leadership, in as much as *duality in leadership* impedes the further development and reinforcement of the joint struggle of the working class.

The interests of the class struggle of the proletariat and the success of the proletarian revolution make it imperative that there be a *single party of the proletariat* in each country. Of course, it is not so easy or simple to achieve this. It requires stubborn work and struggle and will of necessity be a more or less lengthy process. The Communist Parties, basing themselves on the growing urge of the workers for a unification of the Social-Democratic Parties or of individual organizations with the Communist Parties, must firmly and confidently take the initiative in this unification. The cause of amalgamating the forces of the working class in a single revolutionary proletarian party, at the time when the international labour movement is entering the period of closing the split in its ranks, is *our cause*, is the cause of the Communist International.

But while it is sufficient for the establishment of the united front of the Communist and Social-Democratic Parties to have an agreement to struggle against fascism, the offensive of capital, and war, the achievement of political unity is possible only on the basis of a number of definite conditions involving principles.

This unification is possible only:

First, on condition of *complete independence from the bourgeoisie and complete rupture of the bloc of Social-Democracy with the bourgeoisie*;

Second, on condition that *unity of action* be first brought about;

Third, on condition that the necessity of the *revolutionary overthrow of the rule of the bourgeoisie* and the establishment of the *dictatorship of the proletariat in the form of Soviets* be recognized;

Fourth, on condition that support of one's own bourgeoisie in *imperialist war* be rejected;

Fifth, on condition that the party be constructed on the basis of

democratic centralism, which ensures unity of will and action, and which has been tested by *the experience of the Russian Bolsheviks*.

We must explain to the Social-Democratic workers, patiently and in comradely fashion, why political unity of the working class is impossible without these conditions. We must discuss together with them the sense and significance of these conditions.

Why is it necessary for the realization of the political unity of the proletariat that there be complete independence of the bourgeoisie and a rupture of the bloc of Social-Democrats with the bourgeoisie?

Because the whole experience of the labour movement, particularly the experience of the fifteen years of coalition policy in Germany, has shown that the policy of class collaboration, the policy of dependence on the bourgeoisie, leads to the defeat of the working class and to the victory of fascism. And only the road of irreconcilable class struggle against the bourgeoisie, the road of the Bolsheviks, is the true road to victory.

Why must unity of action be first established as a preliminary condition of political unity?

Because unity of action to repel the offensive of capital and of fascism is possible and necessary even before the majority of the workers are united on a common political platform for the overthrow of capitalism, while the working out of unity of views on the main lines and aims of the struggle of the proletariat, without which a unification of the parties is impossible, requires a more or less extended period of time. And unity of views is worked out best of all in joint struggle against the class enemy already *today*. To propose to unite at once instead of forming a united front means to place the cart before the horse and to imagine that the cart will then move ahead. (*Laughter.*) Precisely for the reason that for us the question of political unity is not a manœuvre, as it is for many Social-Democratic leaders, we insist on the realization of unity of action as one of the most important stages in the struggle for political unity.

Why is it necessary to recognize the necessity of the revolutionary overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the form of Soviet power?

Because the experience of the victory of the great October Revolution on the one hand, and, on the other, the bitter lessons learned in Germany, Austria and Spain during the entire post-war period, have confirmed once more that the victory of the proletariat is possible only by means of the revolutionary overthrow of the bourgeoisie, and

that the bourgeoisie would rather drown the labour movement in a sea of blood than allow the proletariat to establish socialism by peaceful means. The experience of the October Revolution has demonstrated patently that the basic content of the proletarian revolution is the question of the proletarian dictatorship, which is called upon to crush the resistance of the overthrown exploiters, to arm the revolution for the struggle against imperialism and to lead the revolution to the complete victory of socialism. To achieve the dictatorship of the proletariat as the dictatorship of the vast majority over an insignificant minority, over the exploiters—and only as such can it be brought about—for this *Soviets* are needed embracing all sections of the working class, the basic masses of the peasantry and the rest of the working people, without whose awakening, without whose inclusion in the front of the revolutionary struggle, the victory of the proletariat cannot be consolidated.

Why is the refusal of support to the bourgeoisie in an imperialist war a condition of political unity?

Because the bourgeoisie wages imperialist war for its predatory purposes, against the interests of the vast majority of the peoples, under whatever guise this war may be waged. Because all imperialists combine their feverish preparations for war with extremely intensified exploitation and oppression of the working people in their own country. Support of the bourgeoisie in such a war means treason to the country and the international working class.

Why, finally, is the building of the party on the basis of democratic centralism a condition of unity?

Because only a party built on the basis of democratic centralism can ensure unity of will and action, can lead the proletariat to victory over the bourgeoisie, which has at its disposal so powerful a weapon as the centralized state apparatus. The application of the principle of democratic centralism has stood the splendid historical test of the experience of the Russian Bolshevik Party, the Party of Lenin and Stalin.

Yes, we are for a single mass political party of the working class. But this party must be, in the words of Comrade Stalin,

“...a militant party, a revolutionary party, bold enough to lead the proletarians to the struggle for power, with sufficient experience to be able to orientate itself in the complicated problems that arise in a revolutionary situation, and sufficiently flexible to steer clear of any submerged rocks on the way to its goal.¹

¹ J. Stalin, *Foundations of Leninism*.

This explains why it is necessary to strive for political unity on the basis of the conditions indicated.

We are for the political unity of the working class. Therefore we are ready to collaborate most closely with all Social-Democrats who are for the united front and sincerely support unity on the above-mentioned principles. But precisely because we are for unity, we shall struggle resolutely against all "Left" demagogues who try to make use of the disillusionment of the Social-Democratic workers to create new Socialist Parties or Internationals directed against the Communist movement, and thus keep deepening the split in the working class.

We welcome the growing efforts among Social-Democratic workers for a united front with the Communists. In this fact we see a growth of their revolutionary consciousness and a beginning of the healing of the split in the working class. Being of the opinion that unity of action is a pressing necessity and the truest road to the establishment of the political unity of the proletariat as well, we declare *that the Communist International and its Sections are ready to enter into negotiations with the Second International and its Sections for the establishment of the unity of the working class in the struggle against the offensive of capital, against fascism and the menace of imperialist war.* (Applause.)

IV. CONCLUSION

Comrades, I am concluding my report. As you see, taking into account the change in the situation since the Sixth Congress and the lessons of our struggle, and relying on the degree of consolidation already achieved in our Parties, we are raising a number of questions today *in a new way*, primarily the question of the united front and of the approach to Social-Democracy, the reformist trade unions and other mass organizations.

There are wisecracks who will sense in all this a digression from our basic positions, some sort of turn to the Right from the straight line of Bolshevism. Well, in my country, Bulgaria, they say that a hungry chicken always dreams of millet. (Laughter, loud applause.) Let those political chickens think so. (Laughter, loud applause.)

This interests us little. For us it is important that our own Parties and the wide masses throughout the world should correctly understand what we are striving for.

We would not be revolutionary Marxists, Leninists, worthy pupils of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, if we did not suitably *reconstruct*

our policies and tactics in accordance with the changing situation and the changes occurring in the world labour movement.

We would not be real revolutionaries if we did not learn from our own experience and the experience of the masses.

We want our Parties in the capitalist countries to come out and act as *real political parties of the working class*, to become in actual fact *a political factor* in the life of their countries, to pursue at all times *an active Bolshevik mass policy*, and not confine themselves to *propaganda and criticism*, and bare appeals to struggle for proletarian dictatorship.

We are enemies of all cut-and-dried schemes. We want to take into account the concrete situation at each moment, in each place, and not act *according to a fixed, stereotyped form* anywhere and everywhere; not to forget that in *varying* circumstances the position of the Communists cannot be *identical*.

We want soberly to take into account *all stages* in the development of the class struggle and in the growth of the class consciousness of the masses themselves, to be able to locate and solve at each stage the *concrete* problems of the revolutionary movement *corresponding* to this stage.

We want to find a *common language* with the broadest masses for the purpose of struggling against the class enemy, to find ways of finally overcoming *the isolation of the revolutionary vanguard* from the masses of the proletariat and all other working people, as well as of overcoming the fatal *isolation of the working class itself* from its natural allies in the struggle against the bourgeoisie, against fascism.

We want to draw increasingly wide masses into the revolutionary class struggle and lead them to the proletarian revolution, *proceeding from their vital interests and needs as the starting point*, and *their own experience as the basis*.

Following the example of our glorious Russian Bolsheviks, the example of the leading Party of the Communist International, the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, we want to combine the *revolutionary heroism* of the German, the Spanish, the Austrian and other Communists with *genuine revolutionary realism*, and put an end to the last remnants of scholastic tinkering with serious political questions.

We want to equip our Parties from every angle for the solution of the highly complex political problems confronting them. For this purpose we want to raise ever higher their *theoretical level*, to train them in the spirit of living Marxism-Leninism and not dead doctrinarism.

We want to eradicate from our ranks all *self-satisfied sectarianism*, which above all blocks our road to the masses and impedes the carrying out of a truly Bolshevik mass policy. We want to intensify in every way the struggle against all concrete manifestations of Right opportunism, realizing that the danger from this side will increase precisely in the practice of carrying out our mass policy and struggle.

We want the Communists of each country promptly to draw and apply *all the lessons* that can be drawn from their own experience as the revolutionary vanguard of the proletariat. We want them as *quickly as possible to learn how to sail on the turbulent waters of the class struggle*, and not to remain on the shore as observers and registrars of the surging waves in the expectation of fine weather. (Applause.)

This is what we want!

And we want all this because only in this way will the working class at the head of all the working people, welded into a million-strong revolutionary army, led by the Communist International and possessed of so great and wise a pilot as our leader Comrade Stalin, be able to fulfil its historical mission with certainty—to sweep fascism off the face of the earth and, together with it, capitalism!

(The entire hall rises and gives Comrade Dimitrov a rousing ovation.

Cheers coming from the delegates in various languages are heard on all sides: "Hurrah!" "Long live Comrade Dimitrov!"

The strains of the "Internationale," sung in every language, fill the air. A new storm of applause sweeps the hall.

Voices: "Long live Comrade Stalin, long live Comrade Dimitrov!" "A Bolshevik cheer for Comrade Dimitrov, the standard-bearer of the Communist International!"

Someone shouts in Bulgarian: "Hurrah for Comrade Dimitrov, the valiant warrior of the Communist International against fascism!" The delegations sing in succession their revolutionary songs—the Italians, "Bandiera Rossa"; the Poles, "On the Barricades"; the French, "Carmagnole"; the Germans, "Red Wedding"; the Chinese, "March of the Chinese Red Army.")

SEVENTEENTH TO TWENTY-FIRST SITTINGS

(August 3 to 5, 1935)

DISCUSSION ON COMRADE DIMITROV'S REPORT

Presiding (*by turns*): Cachin, Dolores, Linderot, Pollitt

THOREZ: Comrades, the report on the offensive of fascism and the struggle for the unity of the working class against fascism, presented at the Seventh Congress of the Communist International, raises questions of considerable importance and of extraordinary international significance. No one could have treated such questions with more competence and authority than our Comrade Dimitrov, the hero of the Leipzig trial. (*Applause.*)

Dimitrov, who from the tribune of this Congress, the highest of all tribunes, set forth the indictment against the sanguinary barbarism of fascism, hurled the same accusations at Goebbels and Goering, the sinister lieutenants of the sinister Hitler at Leipzig, in the name—as he proudly declared—of the Communist International and of all the working people of the world.

It was again Dimitrov who, by the example of his calm and indomitable courage, stimulated the unity of the working class, the union of all anti-fascists against the greatest crime known to history. Throughout the world, millions upon millions, Communists, Socialists, anti-fascists, workers and intellectuals, followed with tense emotion the heroic struggle of Dimitrov against the executioners of the German people, the persecutors of our courageous Thaelmann.

The name of the Bolshevik Dimitrov is pronounced with heartfelt gratitude and affectionate admiration by all those who want to unite in order to repel the brutal assault of fascism.

Marcel Cachin has already given the Congress a vivid account of the great battle going on in France between the forces of reactionary fascism and the progressive and revolutionary forces. There is no doubt that this struggle in France assumes great international significance. The future of the people of France and of the peoples of Europe, for many years to come, depends upon the issue of this battle and upon the outcome of our anti-fascist movement. Conscious of the responsibilities of our Communist Party, not only to the proletariat of France but to our brothers in other countries as well, we shall endeavour to make a contribution based upon the rich experience of our anti-fascist movement to the discussion of the report of our Comrade Dimitrov, so powerful, and at the same time so simple and so moving.

I. FASCISM IN FRANCE—A REAL DANGER

The mighty demonstration of the People's Front on July 14 in France has evoked wide response throughout the world. Never before had a manifestation of such magnitude been witnessed in Paris. Half a million men and women marched from the Place de la Bastille to the Place de la Nation through the old Faubourg Saint-Antoine, rich in revolutionary memories. At the initiative of the Amsterdam-Pleyel Committee,¹ numerous organizations participated in the people's demonstration of July 14 in Paris and throughout France. Among them were the Communist Party, the Socialist Party, the Radical-Socialist Party, the two General Confederations of Labour, the League of the Rights of Man, various ex-servicemen's associations, the United Sports' Federation, the Young Communist, Young Socialist, Young Radical and Young Republican Leagues, etc. The crowd was ardent and enthusiastic. It acclaimed the People's Front and its slogans of immediate struggle for peace, bread and liberty. It manifested particular attachment to our Communist Party, the champion of workers' unity, the initiator and organizer of the People's Front. It acclaimed the slogan, from then on the most popular slogan in France, "*Soviets Everywhere.*"

However, as Comrade Dimitrov correctly emphasized yesterday, it would be quite dangerous to yield to the illusion that fascism is already defeated. At the very hour that the people of Paris were proclaiming their readiness to curb the road to fascism, Colonel Count de la Rocque

¹ The Second International Congress of the Amsterdam Anti-war Movement took place in 1933 in the Salle Pleyel in Paris.

was reviewing his civil war troops. There were 35,000 of them, invited by the head of the government to relight the Memorial Flame at the Tomb of the Unknown Soldier. They marched past in cadenced step, in military formation. And we know that the *Croix de Feu* (Fiery Cross) possesses arms, motorcycles, automobiles and airplanes. The fascist enemy has not been crushed. It is regrouping its forces and is preparing for new attacks. The danger continues to grow. The profound causes that give birth to fascism, that permit it to develop and to gain in strength, have not disappeared. The continued aggravation of the general crisis of capitalism, and the persistence of the economic crisis, are making the toilers' living conditions more and more miserable. In order to defeat and hold back the revolt of the labouring masses, and to prepare for war by *ensuring its hinterland*, the bourgeoisie on an international scale requires fascism.

In France the curve of production has again fallen, dropping toward the lowest point (1932). Unemployment is greater than last year. In spite of the restrictions of every kind imposed upon the workers, the minor government officials, the peasants, the small shopkeepers, and the ex-servicemen, for the past three years, the deficit in the state budget continues to grow.

A mighty wave of discontent is rising through the country. In Paris and in the provinces, in spite of bans, arrests and dismissals, the demonstrations multiply, imposing and militant. The revolutionary upsurge is growing. Communist influence is increasing. That is why the French bourgeoisie is turning toward fascist dictatorship, is arming and inciting its mercenary bands. That is why Premier Laval tolerates, encourages and even legalizes the *Croix de Feu* at a time when the People's Front demands its disarming and dissolution.

Moreover, certain sections of the big bourgeoisie are opposing the Franco-Soviet pact of mutual assistance. They are carrying on a campaign against the Soviet Union and against communism in general. They demand a rapprochement with Hitler Germany. They base themselves upon the most reactionary elements and upon the fascist groups; their leaders are negotiating with Hitler. They have even found a mouthpiece in the person of the renegade Doriot.

In analyzing the general and specific conditions of fascist development, we must pay very special attention to the subjective causes which rendered the temporary victory of fascism possible in several countries. These are, above all: the isolation of the working class, or its insufficient influence among the middle classes drawn along by fascism and placed under the political leadership of the big bourgeoisie; as well

as the division of the working class caused and maintained by the reformist policy of Social-Democracy.

The course of events in Germany—where we witnessed several socialist or coalition governments, and in Austria and Spain—where socialist leaders likewise sat in the councils of government—particularly illustrates this tragic reality. Social-Democracy's accord with the bourgeoisie had as its complement obstinate rejection of the united front with the Communists.

The armed struggles of the Austrian and Spanish proletariat, the fighting in Vienna and in the Asturias, even though they were unable to prevent the victory of fascism, nonetheless resulted in a widening of the united front. The Communist and Socialist proletarians shed their blood together against the common enemy for the great and noble cause of the liberation of the working class. The events in Germany, Austria and Spain suddenly illuminated the road for a large number of our Socialist brothers.

These events opened their eyes to another policy, *to the policy of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin, to the policy of the Communist International.*

What a startling contrast between the results of the two policies, the two roads proposed to the working class: one by Social-Democracy, the other by the Communist International!

On the one hand, defeat, fascism, terror, the economic crisis and its formidable consequences for the working class: unemployment, penury, starvation, the degradation of man; and against this sombre background the mad race of armaments, the preparation for a frightful war which would plunge the world into an abyss of ruin and blood.

On the other hand, the victorious building of socialism, the miracles of industrialization and collectivization, the well-being, the cultural blossoming, of free peoples; the joy of living discovered again in the love of creative labour; a new world that exalts the personality by elevating the collective—the Land of Soviets that is fighting for peace.

Glory to the Bolshevik Party!

Glory to Lenin, who led the working class to power over one-sixth of the globe and paved the road along which we are marching!

Glory to Stalin, our beloved leader and teacher, whose genius has solved the problems of building socialism in the U.S.S.R., and who is leading the international proletariat to victory! (*Applause.*)

The Soviet Union, by its very existence, lays bare and accentuates the internal and external contradictions of capitalism. It intensifies the general crisis of capitalism, and makes it more profound. It is a mighty

lever of the proletarian revolution throughout the world. By its living example, it wins the workers and the toiling masses for the cause of socialism; it draws these masses into the struggle for the conquest of power.

It is under these general conditions of the offensive of fascism and of the parallel growth of the forces of revolution, that the resistance of the masses, the extent of the anti-fascist movement in France, acquire a great international significance.

Hitler's coming to power in Germany has galvanized the forces of reaction in all the countries of capitalism. In Austria, in Poland, in Czechoslovakia, even in France, the success of National-Socialism, while arousing the working class, has reinforced the fascist elements and tendencies, and strengthened fascism wherever it is in power. At the same time the menace of a new imperialist war grew, as did the threat of aggression against the Soviet Union.

The successes gained in our anti-fascist struggle in France are galvanizing the forces of the working class and of anti-fascism in all the capitalist countries, at the same time helping to put off the imperialist war and to prevent aggression against the Soviet Union.

The breadth and the drive of the anti-fascist movement in France are modifying to a certain extent the relationship of forces on an international scale, in favour of the camp of the proletarian revolution.

II. THE LESSONS OF INTERNATIONAL EXPERIENCE

Comrade Dimitrov explained in his report that the Communist Parties had not been strong enough to draw the working class and all the working people generally, divided by the noxious policy of Social-Democracy, into the struggle against fascism.

Many weaknesses and omissions in the anti-fascist struggle in other countries were due to an inaccurate estimate of *fascism*, and at the very least, confusion regarding the specific content of fascism as compared to bourgeois democracy. From this fundamental error there could only follow passivity, underestimation of the fascist danger and of the terrible menace that it represents for all peoples, both by the exercise of its bestial dictatorship, as well as by its foreign policy of adventure and provocation, which leads directly to war.

The failure to understand the role of fascism, which is at one and the same time a product of capitalist decomposition and the instrument of the brutal and violent offensive of capital against the working class, also resulted in a certain fatalism.

At the Eleventh Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International in March 1931, Comrade Manuilsky denounced the monstrous error of those who, seeing fascism only as a product of capitalist decomposition, "*ascribe to fascism a revolutionary role.*"

At the Twelfth Plenum Comrade Ercoli pointed out how dangerous it would be to expect an automatic and rapid collapse of fascism wherever it had seized power. An analogous position on the part of our Communist Party of Italy, where sectarian tendencies dominated for a long time, did not allow it to make use of the crisis that followed the assassination of Matteotti.

Other weaknesses and mistakes came from a superficial and incorrect evaluation of the development of the struggle, of the relationship of class forces, of the episodes of fascism's advance and retreat and of the phenomena of differentiation and regrouping that were taking place within it.

Lenin was fond of saying that "*the course of the revolution is not as straight as the Nevsky Prospect.*"¹ The course of counter-revolution is not a straight one either. The periods of success and strengthening of fascism are followed under the pressure of the masses either by periods of standstill or by a retreat or of growing difficulties. Contradictions and internal conflicts arise within the camp of fascism itself. In such a case it is necessary to redouble the attack on fascism but it should not be proclaimed that "fascism is already defeated," or that it is on the eve of collapse.

The major weakness in several countries, and in Germany above all, was the absence of a fighting united front of the working class against fascism. German Social-Democracy preferred to bury itself under the ruins of the Weimar Republic rather than consent to a united front of the working class. Unfortunately, the directives of Thaelmann and of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of Germany for the organization of the united front were not fully realized.

The crisis of Social-Democracy, the drop in its influence and membership, the disarray among the masses of workers were not always correctly estimated. Since the workers, leaving the Social-Democracy, are not drawn into the united front, this means a weakening of the working class by which fascism profits. The remarkable progress of our sister Party in Germany, which succeeded in obtaining 6,000,000 votes, was less than that of the National-Socialists. Similar facts have recently occurred in the German areas of Czechoslovakia.

¹ A street in Leningrad—Ed.

The other essential weaknesses consisted in insufficient attention to the partial demands of the masses of working people, principally to the needs of the middle classes which became an easy prey to fascist demagogy. Finally, there was some hesitation at times when the situation dictated resolute mass action which alone could have caused the balance to tip in favour of the working class.

III. THE FASCIST OFFENSIVE AND THE RESISTANCE OF THE MASSES IN FRANCE

In his remarkable work *The Class Struggles in France*, Marx wrote that revolution organizes counter-revolution, and that, in accordance with the laws of dialectics, counter-revolution in turn arms the revolution by producing a real revolutionary party matured in the battle against its adversary. Marx's thesis enables us better to grasp the stages and aspects of the development of fascism in France, and of the growing resistance of the masses to the fascist offensive.

The first groupings of a clear fascist character appeared in France at the end of 1924, following the mighty demonstration that accompanied the transfer of the remains of Jaurès from the Chamber of Deputies to the Pantheon. It was at the time of the first cartel, that is to say, of Radical cabinets supported by the Socialist Party. Communist influence was on the rise after the courageous campaign of our Party against the occupation of the Ruhr and against the Poincaré government.

The bourgeoisie financed the organization of fighting detachments against the working class. This first attempt met with failure owing to the general situation, as well as to the Party's vigorous counter-thrust. The activity of the fascist leagues was met by a greater activity of the Communist Party. At that time we alone fought at the head of the workers against the war in Morocco, and later, in 1926, against the Poincaré government.

In 1929, with the growing authority of the Party, owing to the repercussions of its campaigns, and at a time when French imperialism was at the head of the sworn enemies of the Soviet Union and was feverishly preparing for war, it made a new attack upon the Communist Party and its newspaper *l'Humanité*. The fascist groups reappeared on the scene. A feature of this period was that the French bourgeoisie encouraged the numerous organizations of counter-revolutionary whiteguard émigrés in France, and supported their criminal enterprises.

Profiting by the arrest of the principal leaders of the Communist Party, the Barbé-Célor group succeeded in getting hold of the leadership of the Party at this time. This group put the revolutionary movement on a sectarian path which facilitated the attack of the bourgeoisie as well as the treason of the leaders of the so-called "Party of Proletarian Unity" group.

After the Barbé-Célor group had been exposed and its sectarian opportunist policy rejected, the Party began a new advance. Nineteen-thirty-two was the period of the second cartel, coinciding with the aggravation of the economic crisis, the commencement of the financial crisis, and the chronic deficit in the state budget, as well as the period of the rapid offensive of fascism in Central Europe. The growing discontent of the masses and a correct policy of demands pursued by the Communist Party aided the current of the united front and of trade union unity. The Amsterdam-Pleyel movement successfully developed at the call of Romain Rolland and Henri Barbusse.

After a great financial scandal had been uncovered at the end of 1933, the fascist groups endeavoured to exploit it for a campaign against Parliament and against the Radical Party that was in power at the time.

The leaders of the fascist leagues and the reactionary politicians endeavoured to prevent the legitimate discontent and indignation of the people against the swindlers and their accomplices—members of Parliament, ministers, high judicial officials, ambassadors, prefects, retired generals and the pillars of the Legion of Honour—turning into Communist channels, and endeavoured to direct them into channels favourable to fascism. They carried on a violent press campaign; they attempted numerous demonstrations. On February 6, 1934, the fascist and reactionary leaders launched their detachments in an attack against the Chamber of Deputies. They did not succeed in their enterprise: the reply of the working class was prompt and effective.

Beginning with the 6th our Party organized counter-demonstrations. On the 7th, the working-class quarters were mobilized. The Daladier government resigned; the reactionary Doumergue was called to power. All demonstrations were prohibited. The Socialist Party abandoned a demonstration that it had called for the 8th in the Place de la Bastille.

The Communist Party, ignoring the police prohibition, carried out the demonstration that it had fixed for the 9th of February in the Place de la République. The grandsons of the Communards, the proletarians of Paris and of the Red suburbs, replied without hesitation

to the call of the Communist Party. They fought the police for five hours to the cry of "Soviets Everywhere!" "Down with Fascism!" throughout a third of Paris, in the districts of the east and around the Place de la République.

Numerous socialist workers had left the places where they were being kept confined by their socialist leaders to join their Communist brothers. The independent union of government employees marched in a column down the Boulevard Magenta towards the Place de la République. Ten dead were left on the pavement, among them a cement worker belonging to the reformist trade union and several non-Party workers.

The courageous battle of the Communist Party in Paris electrified the workers, and peasants in the provinces. It was a signal and an example. On February 12 the general strike called by the C.G.T., under the pressure of the C.G.T.U. (Unitary Confederation of Labour) and the Communist Party, pulled 4,500,000 workers out of the factories. For the first time Communists, Socialists, and workers organized in both the revolutionary and reformist trade union federations were united on a huge scale in demonstrations. There were more than 1,000,000 demonstrators, 200,000 of them in Paris. An equal number, ardent and stirred, participated in the funeral of the victims on February 17.

The working class of France, influenced by the energetic action of the Communist Party, had repulsed the first serious attack of fascism. (*Applause.*)

But Doumergue is in power—the National Union, a political coalition serving big business. It favours the criminal acts of the fascist bands, who are trying to regain influence after their half-defeat in February. Throughout the country attempts at fascist parades or meetings meet with vigorous counter-demonstrations by the workers. A dozen workers were killed in battle against the fascists, who were armed and protected by the police. But each victim fallen for the cause strengthens still more the will of the working class to struggle. Meanwhile, the pact of common struggle against fascism is signed by the Communist Party and the Socialist Party. The united working class begins to attract the middle classes.

The Communist Party won a brilliant victory in the cantonal elections in October, 1934, curbing the advance of the Right parties that favour fascism. Doumergue is forced to resign.

Then, face to face with the growth of Communist influence and with the development of united action, the fascist groups redouble their activity. Some of them have remained sects, mercenary bands without

great influence among the masses. The Croix de Feu, on the other hand, has developed, and multiplies its preparation for civil war

During the recent ministerial crises Colonel Count de la Rocque, head of the Croix de Feu, stated "*that there would be sport if the Left government were formed.*" The insolent threats of de la Rocque, his rehearsals of future punitive expeditions, had as their result the rapprochement of the Radicals with the People's Front. They joined in the rally of July 14.

And now the battle is going to develop and rise to a higher level, owing to the ferment provoked by the application of Laval's emergency decrees.

There is at present a stagnation, and in some cases even a decline, in the influence of fascism in France. We see polemics going on between the different fascist groups, dissensions within several of these groups. The French fascists have not been able to unify their movement entirely. The Camelots du Roi are quarreling with the Young Patriots; the Francists and the Solidarité Française polemicize against the Croix de Feu in their press, etc.

The Agrarian Party has not yet succeeded in organizing what it calls a "peasant front." Its leaders have denounced the fascist Dorgeres, who was acting on behalf of a clique of country squires and big landed proprietors. The Taxpayers' League, led by reactionaries, has suffered its first split and is threatened by a second, because its leadership, tributary to big business, attempts to justify the emergency decrees. The same is taking place among the ex-servicemen and in the associations of small tradesmen, who backed the fascist groups on February 6. The rank-and-file adherents of these organizations, influenced by the Communist Party and the People's Front, often place their reactionary and pro-fascist leaders in a difficult situation.

Voices are already being raised among the Catholics against fascist penetration of the Catholic organizations. Sections of the Christian Young Workers' Organization have expelled members of the Young Patriots from their ranks. Hitler's attacks upon the churches have not been without repercussions in France. On July 27 last, a big meeting for the liberation of Thaelmann rallied an audience of 10,000 in Boulogne, a suburb of Paris. At this meeting, alongside the Communists there spoke Socialists, Pierre Cot, former Radical minister, and a Catholic priest denounced Hitler's persecution of the church and called for organized struggle against fascism. Finally, certain reactionary leaders, such as Tardieu, former premier, profess a gloomy pessimism. Tardieu publicly vents his rancour against his

friends of yesterday. He blames all of them and accuses them all of lacking courage.

But once again, the big bourgeoisie, under the spur of necessity and fearing for its domination, is forcing the leaders and the most resolute and bellicose elements of fascism into a regrouping of their forces. That is what has brought about the great development of the Croix de Feu movement. The Croix de Feu and the "National Volunteers" now claim more than 300,000 members. They have established sections sub-divided into groups. Their leader, Colonel Count de la Rocque, whose brother is in the service of the pretender to the throne of France, is an ex-officer of the espionage service, the Second Bureau. He served as intelligence officer in Morocco and left the army in order to accept a highly paid position in the electricity trust. After he had become president of the Fiery Cross movement, he steered the latter into a sharply fascist course. His program is expressed in the formula: "*French Reconciliation—Love of Country—Reform of the Constitution.*" Translated for the working class, this reads: In the service of capital against the working class.

The anti-capitalist, anti-parliamentary and anti-government, demagoguery of the Croix de Feu movement poorly veils the actual points of its program, such as repeal of the social insurance law and, at the present time acceptance of the emergency decrees, etc. The leaders of the Croix de Feu are at the service of those who pay them, the electricity trust with M. Mercier, member of the Croix de Feu, at its head, the great French banks with Finaly at their head, and the Comité des Forges and the Bank of France, with de Wendel, who carries membership card No. 13 in the Croix de Feu.

A few words on the methods of the Croix de Feu. They have organized soup kitchens, workshops to teach sewing to young girls, the distribution of cheap clothing, dispensaries for the poor, and visiting nurse services, imitating the activities of the Communist municipalities. They established social welfare services, children's groups and crèches. They have organized young people's clubs, theatres, choruses, gymnasiums, and holiday camps. They have even organized some repair shops for the young unemployed, under the guise of apprenticeship. They have equipped a solarium, as well as convalescent homes.

The Croix de Feu established one of its soup kitchens at Villejuif, a town with a Communist administration. The Party recommended the unemployed to go and eat the soup of the Croix de Feu while demonstrating against the fascist leaders. For three weeks an unusual struggle thus took place here against the fascists, which aroused the workers

all over the country. The unemployed, with Communists at their head, went to the soup kitchens singing the *Internationale* and hissing the Fiery Cross members, shouting: "To the lamp post with de la Rocque!" (Applause.)

It need not be added that the Croix de Feu did not continue soup kitchens of this sort for a long time.

The fascists are carrying on chauvinist campaigns against foreign workers, the "aliens." In particular, they are fomenting anti-Semitism.

They are endeavouring to arrive at an understanding with Hitler against the Soviet Union, against Communism.

The victory of fascism in France would mean the suppression of the toiling masses economically and politically. It would mean starvation wages for the workers, the abolition of the already meagre social legislation, the prohibition of strikes and the suppression of all resistance to the capitalist offensive, the destruction of the trade unions and the dispersal or "coordination" of the workers' cooperatives.

The victory of fascism would mean the unrestrained reduction of the salaries of office workers, their dismissal and brutal regimentation. The "National Unity" government has already abolished 5,000 teachers' posts in the secular schools.

The victory of fascism would mean that shopkeepers and artisans will be delivered over to arbitrary and ruthless exploitation by the big capitalists, houseowners, trusts, transport companies, M. Mercier, the electrical industry king, and M. de Wendel, the head of the Comité des Forges.

The victory of fascism would mean that the peasantry would be sacrificed to the interests and privileges of the landlords, the capitalist monopolists, the finance magnates; it would mean the complete ruin of the peasant's farm.

The victory of fascism would mean that the intellectuals would be subjected to the scorn and abominable attacks to which such great scientists as Perrin and Langevin are already being subjected by the fascists. Auto-da-fé, mediæval bonfires, would be lit as in Hitler Germany.

The victory of fascism would mean the abolition of all liberties; it would mean sanguinary terror, the complete enslavement of the working people, the arrest and murder of the active champions of the working class, the beating-up of Communists, Socialists, Republicans and Democrats.

The victory of fascism would mean the persecution not only of Jews, but also of Catholics and Protestants, as we are now witnessing in

Germany.

The victory of fascism would be a catastrophe for France and would mean the victory of the worst form of reaction all over Europe.

The victory of fascism in France would mean aggression against the Soviet Union.

We desire at all costs to avoid this catastrophe, to save our country, all Europe, the whole world from these horrors. (*Applause.*)

A beginning has been made.

How did we do it, Comrades?

How did we set about it?

IV. IN DEFENCE OF THE DEMANDS AND THE LIBERTIES OF THE FRENCH PEOPLE

The starting point of our Party's success in the organization of the united front, and of the People's Front against fascism, was the attention concentrated on the immediate demands of the working people, the defence of their daily interests.

The Party, guiding itself by the valuable advice of the Communist International, endeavoured to formulate a number of special demands for each category of working people.

We have fought, and we are fighting, against the reduction of wages and salaries, for the forty-hour week without reduction of wages, for collective wage agreements, for real social insurance at the sole expense of the employers and the state.

We have fought, and we are fighting, for work for the unemployed, for their registration on the unemployment relief rolls, for the increase of allowances paid the unemployed, for the organization of free meals, and for the free distribution of coal, clothing and milk for children.

In our Communist municipalities we are doing all we can for the unemployed. In Ivry, for example, a municipal truck delivers to the door free milk for the little children of the unemployed. (*Applause.*) The older children receive free meals in the school lunchrooms. Such examples, brought to the attention of the workers, especially in the Paris region, have contributed considerably to our successes in the recent elections.

We have fought for the protection of the workers' children and the young workers. Our Young Communist League, under the direction of the Central Committee of the Party, has worked out a program for the defence of the young working people which has become the basis for the youth united front.

We have fought, and we are fighting, for the defence of the minor officials, the railway men, and postal employees against the emergency decrees, against layoffs and dismissals.

We have fought, and we are fighting, for the defence of the rights of the ex-servicemen and the war victims against the reduction of their pensions.

We have fought, and we are fighting, for the interests of tenants, shopkeepers, artisans and peasants. We demand the reduction of house and farm rents, the reduction of taxes, and the organization of immediate aid to all the victims of the crisis.

We have supported the peasants who demonstrated against the lowering of the prices for their products; we have proposed a debt moratorium for them; we have demanded crisis relief for them; non-interest-bearing loans, and the free distribution of seed and fertilizer.

We have fought, and we are fighting, against the high cost of living, drawing the working women into the battle against the big middlemen, but taking care not to line up the consumers against the peasants or against the small tradesmen, but bringing them together against the common enemy, big business.

We have formulated definite demands, but we have not hesitated to take over those that were launched by other organizations, even those hostile to the Communist Party, provided these demands correspond to the desires of certain categories of working people, and correspond to the interests of the working class.

We have done more than formulate the urgent demands of the masses of working people. We have indicated the means of financing them: we have advanced our proposals for eliminating the budget deficit, we have proposed reducing the war and police budgets, recovering the advances made to the big banks that dominate the government. Above all, we propose an extraordinary and progressive levy on capital.

Our whole campaign is conducted under the slogan: "*Make the rich pay.*" And we did not merely carry on a campaign, but we gave an example of how it could be done, to the extent that the control of big municipalities enabled us to do so. The state allows municipalities to levy a progressive tax on premises used for commercial and industrial purposes. In Paris this tax is set at the fixed rate of 3 per cent, regardless of the size of the establishment. In Ivry, in a Communist municipality, we levied the same tax in the following fashion: 1 per cent for annual rents below ten thousand francs, for small merchants; 2 per cent for annual rents, ranging from 10,000 to 20,000 francs; and 6 per cent above 20,000 francs. This tax provided our local budget with

1,275,000 francs; and it is the money paid by the industrialists of Ivry that has enabled us to give milk to the children of the unemployed. (*Applause.*)

The whole press was forced to speak of our financial program. On several occasions Premier Doumergue polemized against the Communists in radio broadcasts, criticizing our financial proposals. The Central Committee issued a poster: "The Communist Party Replies to M. Doumergue," which had an unprecedented success and, by its content and its deliberately moderate tone, produced a deep impression among the lower middle class elements.

The Party endeavours to reply to all the questions of the day, to offer its solutions to all current problems: the Central Committee worked out only a few days ago a "plan of financial readjustment." It headed this plan with its proposal for a levy on big fortunes, as well as various measures against the rich. The plan also contains a demand for the Bank of France being taken over by the state, and state control of private banks. Owing to the financial crisis and speculation in the franc, control of the Bank of France has become a pressing issue.

Long ago Marx emphasized the interest of the financiers and bankers in state budget deficits. For the bankers, the deficit and state loans are at once an object of speculation, a source of their profit, and a means of dominating the state, of holding it at their mercy under the constant threat of bankruptcy. Premier Daladier, Radical, declared at a congress of his party that:

"Two hundred families have become the undisputed masters, not merely of French economy, but of French politics."

The regents of the Bank of France belong to these two hundred families. They are the owners and the directors of the big banks, the mines, the blast furnaces, the railways. The Communist Party proposes the abolition, pure and simple, of this regency council, the master of credit and money, and the veritable holder of power in the country.

The effectiveness of our proposal is underscored by the anger of the reactionary and pro-fascist newspapers.

One of the factors of our success in organizing a wide anti-fascist front in France has been the consistent position of our Communist Party on the question of bourgeois democracy as well as the utilizing of the revolutionary traditions of the French people. Fascism and bourgeois democracy are two forms of the dictatorship of capital.

It does not follow, though, that the masses of the people are indifferent to what economic or political forms of enslavement they are subjected to.

Fascism means sanguinary terror, against the working class, the destruction of workers' organizations, the dissolution of the trade unions, the suppression of the Communist Parties, the mass arrest of workers and revolutionaries, the torturing and assassination of the best sons of the working class. Fascism is bestiality unchained, it means the return to the pogroms of the Middle Ages, the annihilation of all culture, the reign of obscurantism and cruelty; it is the hideous war to which Hitler and Mussolini are leading.

Bourgeois democracy is a minimum of precarious, contingent liberties, unceasingly reduced by the bourgeoisie in power, but none the less offering the working class, the working people in general, an opportunity of mobilization and of organization against capitalism. In his report to the Seventeenth Congress of the C.P.S.U. (B.), after having shown that "the idea of storming capitalism is maturing in the minds of the masses," Stalin said:

"This, as a matter of fact, explains the fact that the ruling classes in the capitalist countries are zealously destroying, or nullifying, the last vestiges of parliamentarism and bourgeois democracy which might be used by the working class in its struggle against the oppressors."

Stalin then showed, in the passage cited yesterday by Comrade Dimitrov, that the victory of fascism in Germany is not merely a sign of the weakness of the working class but a sign of the weakness of the bourgeoisie as well.

Stalin has given us the key to the problems facing the Communist Parties, and ours in particular. He shows us, first of all, that fascism does not result from the mere desires of the bourgeoisie. The bourgeoisie must ensure or retain for itself a mass base for the exercise of its class rule. It is *obliged* to resort to fascist methods solely because of the extreme aggravation of all the contradictions in the capitalist system.

Then Stalin shows us the importance of a resolute struggle to retain for the working class, and for the labouring masses in general, democratic liberties—the vestiges of bourgeois democracy that can be utilized against the capitalist enemy and its fascist tool by the exploited and the oppressed.

The working class of France is aware of the great importance of these directives of Stalin, the leader of the world proletariat. Taught and guided by the Communist Party, the working class of France is

likewise aware of what great possibilities of mobilizing the middle classes are offered by the defence against fascism of the liberties to which the people of France are so profoundly attached. Comrade Dimitrov rightly said that we must not close our eyes to the growing reactionary limitation of bourgeois democracy, to the process of fascizing the state, to the necessity of fighting step by step to defend every democratic liberty, even the most insignificant. In this we profit by the favourable objective conditions, beyond a doubt.

France is a country of old bourgeois democracy, the classical country of the bourgeois revolution. The working class has participated in several revolutions; the Paris Commune was the first example of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The French peasant regards with abhorrence the descendants and the successors of the old feudal lords. He knows that the Great French Revolution gave him land. In 1848 the peasant did not understand the Second Republic, and he threw himself into the arms of Louis Bonaparte because, ever since the beginning of the February Revolution, the big bourgeoisie, the financial aristocracy, had burdened him with new taxes, encumbered him with mortgages, and thus threatened his possession of his plot of land. Subsequently, under the Third Republic, the French peasant, who still is the most numerous element in the population of our country, received certain advantages. Up to very recently the bourgeoisie had handled him with care. Universal suffrage gave him the illusion of being the sovereign of the country. *In fact, he was and remains the decisive factor of the situation.* The French peasant is a republican. *That is not merely a phrase.* It sufficed that the fascist agitator Dorgeres be unmasked as a royalist for the peasants of the Blois region, though very dissatisfied with the government, to defeat him in a parliamentary by-election.

Our Communist Party has not hesitated to make use of the revolutionary traditions. In a letter of September 21, 1870 to Joseph Bloch, Engels writes:

*"Among these [conditions] the economic ones are finally decisive. But the political, etc., ones and indeed even the traditions which haunt human minds, also play a part, although not the decisive one."*¹

Up to recently the bourgeoisie had made use of these traditions against the working class to justify and consolidate its rule. Now the revolutionary traditions are becoming an additional weapon in the hands

¹ *The Selected Correspondence of Karl Marx and Frederick Engels.*

of the working class in its struggle against the bourgeois state in its fascist form. We draw from the past to prepare for our future.

In the name of the working class we claim the intellectual and revolutionary heritage of the Encyclopædists of the eighteenth century, who paved the way for the Great Revolution of 1789 with their works and with their writings. We show that their materialist doctrine, made more profound, developed, and enriched by the genius of Marx, Engels, Lenin, and Stalin, has become dialectical materialism, Marxism-Leninism: the theory and the practice of the revolutionary proletariat, the great builder of socialism, already holding power on one-sixth of the globe.

We show how the communist proletarians, following Lenin's recommendation, try "to enrich their minds with all the treasures of knowledge created by humanity."¹ And we do this at a time when the bourgeoisie, and fascism in particular are trying to throw us back into the barbarism of past centuries, are forsaking the heritage of the Encyclopædists, are rejecting the theories of Darwin, are burning the works of Marx, and are fostering credulity and ignorance.

In the name of the working class we claim the heritage of the Jacobins, their courage and revolutionary energy.

Lenin often said: "The Bolsheviks are the Jacobins of the proletarian revolution." He wrote:

"The bourgeois historians see in Jacobinism a downfall. The proletarian historians see in Jacobinism one of the greatest *upsurges* of an oppressed class in its struggle for liberation. The Jacobins gave France the best models of democratic revolution, and of how to repel the coalition of monarchs formed against the republic....

"It is natural for the bourgeoisie to hate Jacobinism. It is natural for the petty bourgeoisie to fear it. The class conscious workers and toilers have faith in the transference of power to the revolutionary oppressed class, for *that* is the essence of Jacobinism, and it is the only way out from the crisis, the only way of stopping economic ruin and the war."²

We glorify the memory of the Commune of 1793 and of the Paris Commune of 1871. As against the chauvinism and fascism and the patriotism of the munitions merchants we proclaim our love of our homeland, of our people.

¹ V. I. Lenin, Speech at the Third Congress of the Russian Y. C. L.

² V. I. Lenin, *Can Jacobinism "Frighten the Working Class?"*, Collected Works Russian edition, Vol. XX.

We are proud of its past of centuries of struggle against enslavement and oppression. And we, the great-grandsons of the sans-culottes of 1792, of the soldiers of Valmy, deny the aristocrats—the descendants of the émigrés of Coblenz, who returned to France in the train of the foreign counter-revolution, M. Colonel de la Rocque, president of the Croix de Feu, whose great-grandfather was in the army of Condé and of the king of Prussia—the right to speak in the name of our country. We denounce them as the traitors of yesterday and of tomorrow, ready, like their sires long ago, like the Russian Whiteguards of today, to bear arms against their own country in order to maintain or recover their privileges and their profits.

The National Conference of our Party in Ivry which was held more than a year ago, in June 1934, boldly orientated the Party along this line, in accordance with the thesis developed so brilliantly yesterday by Comrade Dimitrov. We have used this language from the tribune of the Chamber, and in our meetings. We have developed the same thesis in our posters, our articles, in all our agitation.

The reactionary press thundered against the presence of the red flag alongside the tricolor at the head of the July 14 demonstration. The reactionary bourgeoisie understands quite well that this is the symbol of the alliance of the petty bourgeoisie with the working class, an alliance which it fears more than anything else in the world. We do not intend to let fascism usurp the flag of the Great Revolution, nor the *Marseillaise*, that hymn of the soldiers of the Convention. (*Applause.*)

Since last year we have addressed ourselves to the soldiers—the sons of the people—and the republican officers. We expressed our hope that they would not let themselves be involved against the people and that they would know how to foil, if necessary, the plot which the reactionary and fascist officers and generals are preparing against the people's liberties and against the country. On July 14, in the demonstration of the People's Front, the Radical deputy, Rucart, vice-chairman of the Army Committee of the Chamber, spoke in terms which I should like to be allowed to quote, so much do they harmonize with the thoughts expressed yesterday by our Comrade Dimitrov.

“The Republicans know that they can count upon the loyalty of the army—the expression of public force, the army composed of the sons of the whole people—to give the lie to all those who may endeavour to make of it a tool for the ambition of one man or for that of a handful of plotters. In the army, the navy and the air force—officers, non-coms, soldiers and sailors—they salute the national forces constituted for the defence of liberty.”

We present ourselves to the masses of the people as the champions of the liberty and the independence of the country, as the representatives of the present and future interests of the people of France. The very tone of our campaigns, of our speeches, articles, and posters, expresses this consciousness of the historic mission of the working class, organized and led by its revolutionary party.

It was this policy that has enabled the French Communist Party to initiate, stimulate and effectively influence a mass movement of considerable extent. Elements of the working class, passive up to now, have been aroused to political life. Considerable sections of the petty bourgeoisie have been carried along into the struggle against fascism.

Naturally enough, there are special, diverse, often contradictory interests among all the social elements and strata united under the emblem of the People's Front. It follows that the Party must know how to achieve the material demands of all strata, to influence the whole movement, ideologically and politically, and organize it, by considering it from the standpoint of the proletariat, which represents the interests of the whole working people of France. It is not sufficient to formulate demands—that is the first step. We must—we realize this—obtain even minimum successes by mass action.

What is more, we must formulate slogans and proposals that raise the movement to a higher stage. We are the Party of the proletariat, of the most exploited as well as the most homogeneous and therefore the most revolutionary class, the class that expects its complete liberation only from a total transformation of society. The Communist Party—party of the working class—armed with Marxist-Leninist theory, is alone in a position to pursue a consistent policy, which has proved itself so magnificently in the Soviet Union. The same is not true of our allies. The urban and rural petty bourgeoisie hates capital, and the bankers, the masters of the credit system, above all; but it believes in the eternal existence of its property, and even in the possibility of increasing it. The representatives of the free professions, the medium and upper ranks of the civil servants, have illusions and prejudices of another sort. They believe present-day society can be improved gradually and peacefully. Among all these elements there sometimes is a grain of chauvinism in their anti-fascism. To them fascism appears essentially under the aspects of Hitlerism and the Nazi bands. The parties and groups based upon the middle classes reflect the latter's illusions and prejudices. They cannot pursue a consistent policy. They frequently vacillate. We try to show them that the success of the anti-fascist movement, of the People's Front, can only be guaranteed in so

far as the non-proletarian labouring masses group themselves around the working class.

How can this going over of the petty bourgeoisie to the positions of the working class be facilitated? Through showing by deeds that the working class is able to direct the general struggle and by proving its own strength. That is how Comrade Manuilsky replied to this question in his speech in reply to the discussion at the Eleventh Plenum of the E.C.C.I.:

"To win allies to the side of the proletariat is only possible ... by demonstration of the strength of the proletariat and of its vanguard—the Communist Party."¹

It is undeniable that the masses of the people in town and country, the middle classes, and the peasants, in particular, play a very important historic role. But this role is never an independent one, however; they either fall under the influence of the big bourgeoisie, of capital, and become the tool of its policy, or they ally themselves with the working class.

In the first case, the results are an increase in the exploitation and the oppression of all the working people—in our age, fascism. That is what was proved by the experience of France in 1848-52, of Germany from 1918 to 1933, and of Spain since 1931.

In the second case, the results are the end of the exploitation and oppression of the people, the flourishing of democracy and of the people's liberties. That is what is brilliantly proved by the experience of the Soviet Union.

Finally, our Communist Party must "employ all of its organizational abilities" to unite and consolidate the anti-fascist people's movement.

In spite of real progress, organizational work still remains our weak point. There are thousands of united front committees. The Amsterdam movement alone, under the attentive direction of our Comrade Henri Barbusse, has grouped around itself 2,000 committees. But that is still quite inadequate. Moreover, many committees have been constituted merely at the top by the meeting of representatives of the participating organizations. The Party's efforts must aim at the democratic election of the committees at the bottom, in the factories, in meetings in the villages, and in the urban districts. Experience has already taught us that in this field we must call upon the initiative of the masses, who have already found the most diverse forms for coming together.

¹ D. Z. Manuilsky, *The Communist Parties and the Crisis of Capitalism*.

V. THE ORGANIZATION OF THE PEOPLE'S FRONT

Comrades, in actively pursuing the mass policy that I have just outlined, and by interesting itself in the demands of all the sections of the labouring population, our Party has succeeded in achieving the success of the People's Front throughout the country. We have been able to extend in considerable measure our influence among the working class and the lower sections of the middle classes.

When the Central Committee brought up the question of the united front and when it drew up the latter's program in October 1934, we could not have imagined that its success would be so immediate.

The Party carried on a sustained campaign in the press, by posters, at meetings, and from the tribune of the Chamber. On the eve of each of the two last congresses of the Radical Party, in Nantes in October, and in Lyons in March, the Communist Party organized big meetings where representatives of the Central Committee outlined our conception of the People's Front, addressing themselves particularly to the delegates of these congresses. A long public discussion started with the Socialist Party. In the meantime the workers and the lower middle-class elements acclaimed the People's Front.

At the end of May, the Party decided to extend the People's Front still further, and to address itself to the parties of the Left with a view to joint action against the fascist leagues, to have a motion introduced in Parliament demanding that the government disarm and dissolve the fascist leagues. The Communist group consisting of nine deputies at the time (out of the 615 in the Chamber), took the initiative of calling a meeting of the Left Parliamentary groups. Upon invitation, the Socialist Party associated itself with our initiative. The Radical Party, the Republican Socialist Party, the Socialist Party of France (Neo-Socialists), the group of Left Independents, and the Party of Proletarian Unity Group (former members of the Communist Party) replied to our call. The meeting took place on May 30. The discussion began on the declaration made by the representative of the Communist Party. We said:

We Communists want to smash fascism. The municipal and cantonal elections show that the majority of the country is against the so-called National Union policy, which is paving the way for fascism. This majority can find expression here, in the Chamber itself, as the groups that have replied to our invitation constitute a majority of the Chamber. *If this majority wishes to put into effect*

a, program striking at the rich and the speculators, relieving the poor and unemployed, *we Communists will support this measure. If this majority wishes to defend democratic liberties, not in words but by taking effective measures, such as the disarmament and the dissolution of the fascist leagues and the arrest of their leaders, we will support these measures.* Such a policy would, moreover, create the best conditions for the maintenance of peace, and it would have our support, not merely in Parliament, but throughout the country.

The impression produced was tremendous. Our declarations were repeated in public session, from the tribune of the Chamber.

That very evening the Flandin government was overthrown.

We had given the Radical deputies a little more courage.

Afterwards, the Left groups met again, always on the initiative of the Communists. A discussion started regarding the eventuality of a Left government. It was our Communist Party that was the driving force at these meetings, putting questions, making it clear that it had no intention of participating in a Left government, but stating that it was always ready to support measures favourable to the labouring masses. The Socialist Party and the Radical Party were led to define their respective policies.

In the meanwhile the Bouisson government had been formed. But the pressure of the masses, reflected in the attitude of the majority of the Radical deputies, elected by peasants, was such that Bouisson was overthrown the day he came before the Chamber.

And the sessions of the Left delegations were resumed.

In the meantime, the Laval Cabinet had been formed. The Communist Party had played a prominent role during the two cabinet crises. With its outcries of indignation, the reactionary and fascist press underscored the success of our tactics.

At this moment the Amsterdam-Pleyel Committee took the initiative of calling the people's demonstration of July 14. It obtained the participation of numerous groups and organizations, among them both General Confederations of Labour and the Radical Party. The Executive Committee of the Radical Party, specially convened for this purpose, voted for it unanimously, except for one vote, after having heard the report of its president, Herriot.

And now? The Party has influenced considerable masses of the middle classes, drawing them toward the Left, toward the working class. Based upon the drive of the masses, the Communist Party has contributed to the overthrow of two successive cabinets. New problems

arise before our Party. The question arises of the possibility of a united front government or a government of the anti-fascist People's Front.

Of course, parliamentary combinations analogous to those of Brandler in Saxony in 1923 are out of the question for us. Nor does this mean a "labour government" of the kind we have witnessed, or are still witnessing, in England and in various Scandinavian countries, and, even less, coalition governments as in Belgium, Czechoslovakia and Spain. It is not a question of managing the affairs of the bourgeoisie. What is involved is fighting fascism, barring its road to power at any price, basing ourselves upon the will to struggle of the masses and upon extra-Parliamentary action.

We Communists are fighting for Soviet power, for the dictatorship of the proletariat. We know that this is the only way to put an end to the crisis, to poverty, to fascism, and to war forever. But we also know that *at the present time only a minority* of the working class, and above all, only a minority of the people of France share our convictions *and are prepared to fight resolutely for the establishment of Soviet power*. That is why Soviet power cannot be the immediate goal of our present struggle. But although we are in a minority, we can and we must march at the head of the majority of the country, which today is already determined to avoid the establishment of a fascist dictatorship at all costs. We can and we must convince the masses, in the struggle and on the basis of their own experience, of the necessity of marching forward towards a Soviet Republic.

The discontent that is accumulating and making itself felt in numerous demonstrations against the emergency decrees can explode and lead to the overthrow of the Laval government and the development of the People's Front, and its constant reinforcement can cause it to become the successor of the National Union governments.

A new cabinet crisis will mean the beginning of a serious political crisis. Laval is said to have told Herriot: "If I resign owing to the opposition of the Radicals, the Parliamentary recess will end in the dictatorship of the Croix de Feu." The Communist Party, the vanguard of the People's Front, can cast a decisive weight in the scale of events. If the People's Front lacks cohesion and boldness, a political formation still more reactionary may follow the Laval government, the government of the National Union; it may even be succeeded by a fascist dictatorship.

If, on the contrary, the Communist Party launches, propagates, popularizes and gets adopted, in time, a minimum of measures of a

transitory nature, the drive of the mass movement can impose a People's Front government, which our Party would support and in which, if necessary, it might even participate.

The anti-fascist battle would become fiercer, since the reactionary and fascist assault would be brutal and immediate. But the People's Front and the Communist Party would have occupied new positions, which we would have to utilize to prepare for the establishment of Soviet power, the dictatorship of the proletariat.

This is no doubt a bold policy, which demands much firmness and prudence. Our Party can put a policy of this sort into effect. It no longer runs the risk of confusing itself or of being confused with the other parties. In severe struggle, by fifteen years of battle, we have conquered our place in the political arena. It is not merely the Communist Party, its members and its active workers, as well as its sympathizers, that are conscious of the Party's special task and of its own goal which it is pursuing in an absolutely independent fashion, but the allies and the opponents of Communism now acknowledge, each in their own fashion, our specific proletarian and revolutionary character, and they take into account our own strength and our independent activity.

In particular, we owe this independence to the application of the "class against class" tactics that has caused us to appear on an absolutely different plane, distinct from all other parties including the Socialist Party. Our action of February 9, 1934, was dictated by these principles of independence.

Adopting an absolutely independent mass policy strictly conforming to the interests of the proletariat, our Party regarded it as its duty to fight energetically for the establishment of the unity of action of the working class itself.

VI. THE STRUGGLE FOR THE UNITY OF THE WORKING CLASS

The Communist International has never stopped fighting to have the desire of the working class for unity realized. It has not stopped demanding the fighting unity of all proletarians. For many years it has addressed itself in vain to the Labour and Socialist International with a view towards organizing the united front in all countries.

On March 5, 1933, the Communist International asked the Communist Parties to approach the Socialist Parties with a view to realizing the bloc of all working people everywhere against the menacing progress of the fascist offensive, and to ensure aid for our brothers of Germany.

On October 10, 1934, the Communist International directly approached the socialist workers and their leadership, proposing the urgent organization of joint action on behalf of the workers and peasants of Spain, who were being violently attacked by reaction, the fascists and the monarchists.

On October 15, 1934, there took place the Brussels interview, where Cachin and I, on behalf of the Communist International, met with the representatives of the Labour and Socialist International, Vandervelde and Friedrich Adler. When we pressed the leaders of international Social-Democracy to give a favourable reply to our loyal and earnest proposal, they asked us this question: "Is this a manœuvre on a grand scale or is this a change of line?" We replied as was fitting. Our Comrade Cachin said:

"I am sorry to hear you talk of a manœuvre. . . . We are in a Europe which is two-thirds fascist. If tomorrow fascism should establish itself in Spain [the battle of Asturias was at its height—*M.T.*] what strength, what power will fascism not acquire in France, and will not fascism derive tremendous encouragement therefrom? How much more dangerous will fascism everywhere become? And so to imagine under the circumstances that we should dream of manœuvring would, indeed, at the present time, be entertaining a very poor opinion of us.

"The danger is there, our houses are on fire; the working class is everywhere endangered in most tragic fashion."

And I added:

"I will tell you quite frankly, Citizen Adler, that this is neither a new line nor a manœuvre on a grand scale on Moscow's part. There has not been and there will not be any change in the policy of the Communist International. . . . We regard what we have done as correct. I even add that we consider that the experiences of the Bolsheviks, in contrast to the experiences of the Socialist Parties in other countries, appear to us more than conclusive, I would even say decisive."

Comrades, you know the results. The delegates of the Second International postponed their reply until the conference of their International, which was to meet in Paris in November. This postponement was tantamount to a refusal. And at this conference the delegates could not agree on the contents of their reply to the Communist International. They had to confine themselves to with-

drawing—as they themselves put it in their letter—their resolution of March 18-19, 1933, which prohibited their parties from establishing the united front on a national scale. Henceforth, they wrote, each Socialist Party remains free to act as it sees fit.

We had achieved the first great success. Must it again be recalled that in April our Communist International once more approached the Labour and Socialist International, requesting that the May First demonstrations be organized in common against fascism and war? This time again in vain.

Nevertheless, the united front was steadily being organized in France.

In the twelve years since 1923 we addressed the Socialist Party twenty-six times. Each time we met with a refusal, sometimes even a rude one. The first earnest step was realized in July 1932, with the Amsterdam Congress. At the Amsterdam Congress, the French delegation included numerous Socialists officially delegated by sections and even by federations. In spite of reprisals and expulsions aimed at the Socialist comrades, a fraternal contact was established in the Amsterdam Committees.

In March 1933, when we turned to the socialist workers and to their leadership on the basis of the letter of the Communist International, we did not receive a direct reply, but Blum tried in a series of articles to keep his party from the united front.

But international events, especially events in Germany, were already influencing the state of mind of the socialist workers.

February 6, 1934, furnished the decisive impetus. The socialist workers threw themselves into the fight alongside the communist workers, participating in the action begun by the Party in Paris and in the provinces.

On May 30 we addressed ourselves to the Permanent Administrative Commission of the Socialist Party, asking it to organize a joint struggle for the liberation of Thaelmann. For the first time we had an interview with Blum and Zyromski. After thinking it over for several weeks, the leadership of the Socialist Party once more rejected the united front. But in the meanwhile, the Socialist Federation of the Seine had accepted a number of proposals of our regional committee. It agreed to organize and to participate in a joint demonstration against the Croix de Feu on July 8. Since then the initiative of the Communists has been meeting with more and more favour among the socialist workers. The Socialist National Council, which met on July 15 to vote on the proposal we had made in public for a pact of joint struggle against war and fascism, was compelled to accept it.

You know the contents of the pact. It concerns the organization of joint struggle against fascism. We had proposed that the action against the emergency decrees should, over and above the ordinary methods of agitation and public demonstration, include the preparation and the calling of strikes. We had proposed that the Communist Party and the Socialist Party together should address the two trade union federations, the C.G.T. and the C.G.T.U. The Socialist Party refused. In order to conclude the pact, we had agreed to a concession in the matter of limiting criticism. We subscribed to the following text:

“During this common action, the two Parties will reciprocally abstain from attacks and criticism of the bodies and the functionaries loyally participating in the action. However, each Party, outside the joint action, retains its independence to develop its own propaganda without insulting or outraging the other Party, and to ensure its own recruiting of members.”

The pact gave the working class of France a great deal. It reinforced the impetus towards trade union unity; it made it possible to draw in the middle classes more effectively. But what must be underlined is that before, as well as after the signature of the pact, our Party never for a moment forgot that the essential content of the united front is action.

We took the initiative for the action of February 9, 1934. Then, on February 10, 1935, we, by *ourselves*, the Communist Party, decided to invite the Paris proletariat to honour the memory of its dead of February 9, 1934. We later invited the Socialist Party to participate in our demonstration.

We likewise took the initiative on May 19, 1935, on the occasion of the traditional demonstration at the Wall of the Communards, organized under the direction of the Central Committee of the Communist Party. But the Socialist Federation of the Seine, influenced by Trotskyist elements, wanted to pledge us on May 19 to a counter-demonstration against the Croix de Feu. We replied: “Here is our decision. If you want to go the Wall of the Communards on the 19th, well and good; you will have your place in the procession. If you do not wish to, we shall go to the Wall without you.” And the Socialist Federation of the Seine had to abandon its plan and join in our parade. Two hundred thousand workers were at the Wall under the leadership of the Communist Party.

Parallel to the organization of the united front from below, we bent our efforts to develop the struggle for trade union unity. The

major step in the organization of the unity of the working class in France must be the realization of the trade union unity.

Precisely due to the united front have we been able to advance along the road to trade union unity, in spite of the bitter opposition by the reformist Confederation of Labour, and particularly by some of the most reactionary of its leaders, allied with the Neo-Socialists. Seven hundred united trade unions have been formed. The railwaymen's unions have been unified on all rail systems, with the exception of two. United local unions and united departmental unions have already been established.

The leadership of the General Confederation of Labour has had to agree to resume discussions with the representatives of the Unitary Confederation of Labour with a view to the realization of trade union unity.

The Communist Parties now bear a very great responsibility in view of the crisis of the Socialist International, in view of the decline in the latter's influence and membership. The socialist workers must not be allowed to fall into disillusion and despair. What is more, we must not allow a part of them to fall under the influence of fascism. It is now a question of leading them into the joint struggle against fascism, even if they are not yet entirely in agreement with us, even if they still harbour suspicions of us, which the joint struggle will weaken or cause to disappear.

To use Blum's expression, we have worked to render the united front "inevitable," and in fact we have rendered it inevitable. By signing the pact certain socialist leaders thought they would be able to re-establish their authority over the Socialist Party members and organizations, who had been gradually led to choose between party discipline and the necessary united front with the Communists. But the workers sometimes have the feeling that certain leaders of the Socialist Party are looking for every occasion to provoke or aggravate difficulties, to slow down united action, nay, even to break the united front. Wherever the leaders of the Socialist Party oppose the united front a loss in socialist influence is noted. Three precise facts contributed to give this impression.

First of all, there was the discussion of the People's Front. From the very beginning, the Socialist Party was hostile to our conception of the People's Front. At bottom, it has persisted in its position of parliamentary action and most of all fears mass action. But it wanted to give itself a more Left appearance. It found our program too moderate; it felt that demanding a capital levy was not sufficient. It proposed the *socialization* of the banks and big industry.

We very calmly replied:

"We Communists, are for socialization; we are for expropriation pure and simple of the capitalist expropriators, but we consider that one condition must be fulfilled in order to socialize, just one little condition: the possession of power, the seizure of power. Now, there is only one method of seizing power that has proved its worth up to now: that is, the method of the Bolsheviks, the victorious insurrection of the proletariat, the exercise of the dictatorship of the proletariat and Soviet power. (*Applause.*)

"However, we Communists are not proposing our fundamental program to you Socialists. We propose that you agree with us upon what can be done together this very day. Do not ask us to adopt your program. We can fight together for immediate demands; we can impose a levy on capital. We have a greater chance of having this demand of the capital levy accepted, since it figured in the program of the Radical Party. Moreover it is a measure that has already been applied in other countries."

After four months of discussion—public discussion carried on in the columns of our newspaper, *l'Humanité*, as well as by the exchange of documents, letters, resolutions—it was found that the disagreement still existed. We continued our efforts. And the Socialist Congress of Mulhouse, under the pressure of the results of the municipal and cantonal elections, had to adopt a resolution in favour of the People's Front.

The second fact: at the time of the criminal assassination of our Comrade Kirov, the proletariat of the Soviet Union and its Communist Party energetically took severe and rigorous measures against the assassins and their accomplices, as it was the duty of proletarians in power to do.

The Bolsheviks have learned and retained the lesson of past revolutions. They know that the generosity of the Communards towards the Versailles adherents was requited by the ferocious assassination of 35,000 Communards. The Bolsheviks struck the assassins with the sword of proletarian justice, and then these counter-revolutionaries found champions among some Social-Democratic Parties.

Leon Blum wrote a tearful article. His paper *Le Populaire* printed the odious declaration of the Russian Mensheviks. We replied energetically and without delay, sharply bringing forth a list of the crimes the Mensheviks themselves committed. We recalled Robespierre's historic phrase: "The sensitivity that bewails only the sufferings of the

people's enemies is suspect to us." We proclaimed our complete solidarity with revolutionary justice, with the Bolsheviks. We nailed the Mensheviks and their friends to the pillory. And they were silenced.

The third fact: when the Franco-Soviet pact of mutual assistance was concluded, and especially when the communiqué was published after the conversation between Premier Laval and our Comrade Stalin, the bourgeois press tried to score a triumph over the Communists of France. They noisily emphasized Stalin's statement about "*understanding and approving France's policy of national defence*," and "*the necessity for the country's putting its material forces upon the level of its defence*." The attack did not come only from the side of the reactionaries but particularly from that of the Socialists.

And this time again it was Leon Blum who was the initiator.

The Trotskyites, the Pupists, as well as Doriot, played their counter-revolutionary role.

The day after the publication of the communiqué, a meeting of the Communists and sympathizers of Paris took place. The speaker of the Political Bureau declared in substance that: (1) the peace policy of the Soviet Union is in conformity with the historic instructions of Lenin, firmly put into practice by Stalin; it corresponds to the interests of the international proletariat; (2) in view of the international situation, in particular the accession of fascism to power in Germany, there is for the moment a coincidence between the interests of bourgeois France and of the Soviet Union against Hitler and National-Socialism, the principal instigators of war in Europe.

We added: the working class of France and its Communist Party resolutely continue their struggle against the French bourgeoisie; they remain opposed to any class peace, opposed to the eventual use of the army against the working class, opposed to the yoke imposed on the colonial peoples by French imperialism. We do not have to support the class policy of the French bourgeoisie. We continue to fight in the name of the working class of France against the enslavement of the people, and against the return to the two-year term of military service.

But we Communists who do not judge war in the fashion of the bourgeois, reformist or pacifist parties take a stand on war as Marxists. declare that in case of aggression against the Soviet Union, we shall know how to rally all our forces and defend the Soviet Union in every way. (*Applause.*)

After this report a resolution was unanimously voted by the audience of 5,000, with only one dissenting vote. The Communists spoke at meetings and mass meetings organized by the Party in connection with

the cantonal elections. At these meetings they developed the content of the big poster that we had immediately placarded on the walls under the title "*Stalin Is Right*." In this poster we had reproduced and commented on the wise words pronounced by the leader of the international proletariat, our Comrade Stalin.

The proletariat, the working people of the Red suburbs and the whole French people approved Comrade Stalin's declaration. The results: in the cantonal elections that took place a week later, our Communist Party made a gain even over the municipal elections, securing 25 out of the 50 seats in the General Council of the Seine. (*Applause.*)

For a long time the Socialist leaders advocated organizational unity as opposed to the united front. But our Party replied: "The united front will prepare for the united party. When, thanks to our efforts and to the support of the masses, unity of action began to be realized and to spread, we ourselves formulated our concept of a united proletarian party.

Last November we proposed to the National Council of the Socialist Party that a national unity conference be called, that joint meetings, open to members of the Communist and Socialist Parties, be held, and that in these joint meetings the problems of immediate action and the question of a single party of the proletariat be discussed.

We renewed our proposal last May in a document entitled: "The Unity Charter of the Working Class."

The united front has been very useful for the working class; it has enabled it to offer better resistance to the offensive of fascism, to the offensive of capital. The united front has brought the sections of the petty bourgeoisie closer to the working class. Certain socialist leaders said: "If we accept the united front, the middle classes will move away from the working class." Facts have given the lie to this assertion.

The united front has also strengthened our Communist Party. That was not the essential aim. It was one of the consequences of unity of action. The influence and the authority of the Communist Party have grown. Its membership has grown considerably. The role of the Communist Party as a political factor has grown.

Cadres have been trained. Yes, there have been great difficulties, hesitation, groping. Everything was not all right; everything is not all right yet. But what tremendous changes! How the spirit of responsibility and initiative has grown in our ranks!

We are recording excellent results, not merely for our Party, but for our Young Communist League as well. We set before our League

the task of winning the young people, of saving them from fascist demagoguery, of satisfying their need for activity, of working to create an organization of youth that does not narrowly copy the slogans and the formulas of the Communist Party. Our Young Communist League has increased its membership fivefold; it has played a big part in the Amsterdam-Pleyel movement; it has rallied around its united front platform the Young Socialist organizations and the Republican and secular youth organizations. It has concluded a united front pact with the Young Socialist League, in spite of the prolonged resistance of the Socialist Party.

The labour sports movement has been united. It has gained 10,000 new members and now has nearly 40,000.

The A.R.A.C., the association of ex-servicemen, has developed. It was founded by Henri Barbusse and at the beginning had a few thousand members; it now has 20,000. It has obtained admission to the General Confederation of Ex-Servicemen, which comprises two and a half million members. (*Applause.*)

Our election tactics have been inspired by the permanent aim of beating the candidates of fascism and of reaction. In the first ballot we waged an independent struggle. In the second ballot, on the basis of applying the pact, Socialists voted for Communists, and Communists for the Socialists reciprocally, with rare exceptions. In the municipal elections we allowed a few joint lists of candidates.

In view of our People's Front policy, we called upon our supporters to vote for Radicals, both in Paris and in the provinces; we put only the following questions to the Radical candidates: Will you defend democratic liberties? Will you demand the disarmament and dissolution of the fascist leagues? In Paris we demanded in addition: vote against Chiappe. In a few cases we even set up joint lists with the Radicals.

Such a policy has made our Party grow in the minds of the workers. They all see that our Party does not pursue a niggardly policy, but a broad policy guided by the consideration that, once involved in battle, one must choose the means that ensure victory.

Comrades, we feel confident that our experience will be useful to the workers of other countries. And I address myself particularly to our brothers of Germany, to the German Socialist workers. I express to them my hope of returning some day soon, as on January 15, 1933, to the tomb of Karl Liebknecht and Rosa Luxemburg, now desecrated by Hitler's dogs, to celebrate there, alongside Thaelmann,

their victory attained thanks to the unity of the working class.
(Applause.)

We are happy, comrades to greet the unity of action partially realized by our brothers in Austria and Spain, a unity born in joint battle.

We are proud that our International once again loudly and clearly proclaims that it is ready to engage in negotiations with the leadership of the L.S.I., both to organize a united front and to prepare for the complete unity of the international proletariat.

The situation in France and throughout the world makes it incumbent upon us to be more and more exacting with regard to our own work and successes. Too great weaknesses still exist in our movement and in our Party, especially in the field of economic struggles and of trade union work, work among the peasantry, the women, and in matters of organization generally.

Although some progress has been effected in the organization of the Party and in inner Party life, it is quite evident that we must do much more. Great slowness, inadequate swing, persists in the work of the Party on all levels.

We must also make a greater effort to raise the ideological level of our Party.

In France, great battles are impending. We have before us the prospect of great class conflicts that our Comrade Pieck portrayed in his closing speech. At this very moment ferment is growing because of the emergency decrees. The 300,000 civil servants—this bulwark of the state that Marx talked about in his *Eighteenth Brumaire*—are rising; the petty bourgeoisie is losing confidence in the leadership of the parties of the big bourgeoisie. Demonstrations are frequent, numerous, enthusiastic and militant. The drive toward the united front, toward unity, toward the anti-fascist People's Front, is growing. But there is also the growing menace of fascism, which is strengthening its organizations and arming its fighting squads. The bourgeoisie is trying to isolate our great Party in order to smash it and break the resistance of the labouring masses.

We bear a great responsibility toward the working class of France, toward the people of our country and toward the international proletariat. We are conscious of this responsibility and of the obligations that it lays upon us.

Our tasks are to strengthen the united front in the political field, and even more so in the economic field, to attain trade union unity, extend and consolidate the anti-fascist People's Front, win over the wide masses of peasants, secure the dissolution and the disarmament of the

fascist leagues that are plotting against the people and the republic and are entering into plots with Hitler against peace; to fight all the forces of reaction, fight to purify the army; to defend our liberties, to defend the Soviet Union.

To realize these tasks we must strengthen our Communist Party, taking as our inspiration Stalin's words:

"The victory of revolution never comes by itself. It has to be prepared for and won. And only a strong proletarian revolutionary party can prepare for and win victory."¹

We want to accomplish these tasks. We want to justify the hopes that Lenin placed in our working class and in the Communist Party of France when he wrote us in 1920, asking us to join the Third International.

We want to be worthy both of the revolutionary past of the people of France, of the fighters of the glorious Commune, and of the example of the Bolshevik Party, the builder of the new socialist world.

We want to spare our country the shame and horror of fascism, to contribute to the liberation of our brothers bowed under the yoke of fascism, to fight with all our heart, with all our strength, for bread, for liberty, for peace, for the defence of the Soviet Union. We want to go further, to the final victory of the Soviets, which we shall achieve under the banner of the Communist International, under the invincible banner of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin.

We know that the battle will be hard, but we are sure of victory.

(Loud and prolonged applause rising to an ovation. The delegates rise and sing the "Internationale." The German delegation shout a mighty "Rot Front!")

POLLITT: Comrades, the British delegation is in complete agreement with the historic report delivered by Comrade Dimitrov.

The whole character of the present international situation makes the question of developing the widest forms of united front struggle, with the revolutionary working class as its indestructible fighting core, the most urgent political task before the Communist International and all its Sections.

In this period of maturing revolutionary crisis and of a new round of revolutions and wars, great revolutionary perspectives open out before the whole working class.

¹ Stalin, *Report to the Seventeenth Congress of the C.P.S.U. on the Work of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B)*

But their realization depends upon how effectively we can strengthen and develop the united front movement.

The movement for the united front which developed out of the line laid down in the Communist International Manifesto of March 1933, had by 1934 led to a situation where a number of Social-Democratic workers had already concluded united front agreements with the Communist Parties, in spite of the ban placed upon such agreements by the Second International. This was a break in the wall of opposition, and the Communist Parties in the countries where such agreements have yet to be realized (and especially in Britain and the Scandinavian countries) have not made the fullest use of it amongst the masses in the fight against the Social-Democratic leaders' opposition.

We have now such rich experiences in our fight to build up the united front that if they are carefully noted we can avoid many mistakes made in the past and eradicate present weaknesses in our work, thus strengthening the whole class character of the united front, and at the same time winning into active participation important sections of the petty bourgeoisie.

Especially must we combat the tendency to generalization in the carrying through of the fight for the united front. We are too content to believe we can easily win the support of the workers by a general appeal for the united front against the attacks of capital, fascism and war. Alongside this, the question of the united front is often placed in an abstract way, and unity looked upon as a thing in itself. Whereas, if we take as our starting point the fact that the united front is the class front of the workers, drawing all into the common action to defend *their* wages and conditions, *their* unemployment benefits, *their* rights and liberties, *their* fight against rapacious landlords, to defend *their* trade unions and cooperatives, that it is to protect *their* homes and families from the horrors of fascism and war—if we can get it understood in this light, then we shall soon see an improvement in every phase of united front activity.

We must learn to utilize every opportunity to get workers acting together on any issue, however apparently "small," as a means of linking this up with the larger political issues as a whole.

It is also necessary to take more careful note of the process of differentiation that is taking place inside the Social-Democratic Parties, the trade unions and cooperative movement.

There is without question, within the ranks of the organizations referred to, a great process of disillusionment going on at the whole policy of class collaboration of the Social-Democratic leaders. There is a greater

readiness to argue and discuss questions of policy and line of fight with the Communists, where previously the bitterest hostility prevailed.

Especially is this so with the lower officials of these organizations. The winning of such workers and lower officials, making a clear line of differentiation between their sincere desire to move to the Left, and both the open reactionary leaders and "Left" leaders who only use demagogic phrases to deceive, must now be more convincingly undertaken. We cannot continue to lump them all alike.

With more flexibility in our tactics and especially our application of them, a more comradely approach, with more expressions of readiness to work with such workers upon issues that they are particularly interested in, we can win them for the united front.

Equally important for the Communist Parties, in fact an obligatory task, is the question of winning the youth into the most active and enthusiastic support for the united front.

Never before has so much effort been made to win ideological influence over the young workers. Every capitalist and reformist party is seeking to win, and then abuse for their own purposes the confidence of the young workers.

The hundred and one ways in which through clubs, scouts, sports leagues, cinemas, training centres, attempts are being made to get across cunning chauvinist propaganda, is being grossly underestimated by the Communist Parties, and especially by the Communist Party of Great Britain.

We are all apt to forget two important factors upon which the warmongers and fascists make full play. First, that a generation has grown up that knows nothing about the horrors and miseries of the last World War. Secondly, that a generation has grown up in a number of the principal capitalist countries that has never known what it is to have a job, or that has only blind alley employment.

Where the young workers have been won for the united front struggle or for the Young Communist League, they have shown themselves to be amongst the most militant and courageous fighters.

Especially is it necessary to combat jingoism amongst the youth and to destroy the slanderous canard that "the Communists are friends of every country but their own." There is now more need than ever to popularize the history of our own country and recall all the great traditions and names that have been associated in the past in the fight for progress and for democratic rights. We must prove that we love our country so well, that our lives are dedicated to removing all

the black spots on its name—to removing poverty, unemployment and the bloody oppression of colonial peoples.

Against the bourgeois jingoism associated with buccaneers, bandits and imperialist conquerors, against their bloody Waterloos, Sedans, Verduns, the Communists must counterpose the heroes of the past and present—Liebknecht and Luxemburg, Lenin and Stalin, Dimitrov and Thaelmann, the heroes of the Chelyuskin. (*Applause.*)

Especially now also does the question of winning women workers and women from the ranks of the petty bourgeoisie become doubly important and new methods must be worked out to draw them into active cooperation with the male workers in all struggles against the worsening of conditions, and against fascism and war.

If we made a careful analysis of who is most active in the various peace movements in England, we should find that the majority are women. Similarly in Labour Party Women's Sections, in certain trade unions and in the cooperative guilds, we shall find an increasing revolt taking place against the whole policy of class collaboration of the Labour leaders.

The realization of this fight to broaden out the united front struggle and to make it all-embracing in such a way that it can win to its support, not only the organized workers, but every democrat and lover of peace, all sections of the petty bourgeoisie, now makes the question of leadership more important and decisive than ever before.

The policy of the ruling classes in Britain is increasingly directed towards strengthening the executive and coercive apparatus of the state limitation of working-class rights of free speech, limitation of rights of anti-war propaganda (Sedition Act), and the extension of extra-parliamentary authorities with administrative powers over wide sections of the workers.

Alongside this policy of the National Government there has developed since 1932 an open fascist party, with all the accompanying semi-military formations, known as the British Union of Fascists, led by Mosley, and lavishly supported by finance capital.

The Mosley fascist organization, with its full-blooded advocacy of German fascism, has conducted considerable propaganda which has met with tremendous hostility from the working class, that has undoubtedly struck this movement heavy blows, and so far prevented Mosley from establishing any sort of mass social basis.

The British ruling class hold Mosley in reserve while the National Government carries through its preparatory work, by its taking advantage of the mass hatred of fascism as expounded by Mosley, to pre-

sent its own policy as upholding all the traditions of British democracy.

The great weakness of the fight against fascism in Britain is that it is seen largely as a fight against Mosley. The tendencies towards fascism, developed in the policy of the National Government, are not seen as a vital danger.

The attitude of the Labour leaders, both towards the fascist tendencies of the National Government and against Mosley fascism, is particularly dangerous. They have done everything in their power to disorganize and prevent the mass fight against Mosley fascism from development, and when, in spite of this, heavy blows are struck at Mosley, they then come forward with the propaganda that Mosley is finished, and that fascism cannot develop in Britain. They are never tired of saying that "Britain is not Germany."

Any attempts to lull the vigilance of the working-class fight therefore at once renders important services to its class enemy.

In the fight to develop the united front movement in Britain, the Communist Party has had many varied experiences and succeeded on occasions in mobilizing large sections of the working class under the banner of the united front.

In the carrying out of what has been achieved, we have also many serious weaknesses and mistakes to take note of.

There is still a lack of conviction amongst our Party members of the burning necessity of the united front, and that without its achievement in the present situation there can be no advance towards decisive revolutionary struggles.

There is great weakness in applying the tactic of the united front in the trade unions and specifically relating its application to the current issues in the factory, industry and trade union, so that we have not succeeded in organizing a great united front campaign around the general demand for wage increases or the discontent with various forms of rationalization, especially speeding-up systems. This is the reason why no big economic struggles have developed during the period when millions of trade unionists have been demanding wage increases. We have also been weak in our campaign for trade union unity both on a national and international scale.

Thus, when the mass movement had developed, it had been mainly based on the unemployed.

During the elections, whilst putting forward its own candidates in places where it had a mass basis, the Party came forward with

proposals to support Labour candidates who were prepared to fight for a united front program.

This line brought us into closer contact with workers belonging to the Labour Party, and opened up negotiations with local Labour organizations for the first time in many years.

But big obstacles remain to be overcome before we can have anything like the mass movement that the whole situation demands. One of the obstacles is the problem of breaking through the opposition of the Labour leaders, which still effectively holds back the workers under their influence from the common fight.

What is the main political reason for this opposition? It is because the Labour leaders recognize that the policy of the united front is that of active daily class struggle, that it strengthens the class front of the workers and opens up quite other perspectives than that of the policy of class collaboration and continuity of capitalism upon which their whole daily practice and policy is based.

At the same time we need to consider what must be done further in our application of the united front in Britain that can bring the Communist Party into closer daily contact with the workers organized in the Labour Party, Trade Union Congress and Cooperative Party.

At our Thirteenth Party Congress, in February of this year, we worked out our united front tactics in relation to the coming general election in Britain.

What must be the role of the Communist Party, and what must be the next steps in the organization of the workers' fight? The Communist Party in its revolutionary agitation and propaganda amongst the workers must popularize an adequate program concretely applied to British conditions and industries as the *only way* in which all their basic problems can be solved and *bread, work and peace* guaranteed to the working population.

The Communist Party must patiently combat all reformist illusions, and help the workers to understand that only their class power can win their immediate demands.

But the principal political task of the Communist Party becomes clear. It is to stand out before every working man and woman in Britain as the initiator and leader of the fight to secure the defeat of the National Government in the elections, by the organization of a broad united front movement, based upon a program of demands that every worker really believes can and must be carried through by a Labour government, and which will strengthen the workers' immediate

fight against capitalism and, putting a brake upon the advance of fascism and war, will help the development towards socialism.

The Communist Party is of the opinion that there are certain demands which represent the main immediate interests of the working class and of all sections of the population who are opposed to war, fascism and the reactionary policy of the National Government. We suggest that these demands should be the program of the united front struggle now, in order to mobilize the widest sections of the people.

At the same time these demands will become the basis on which a Labour government can be elected to immediately put this program into operation. The slogan: "For the preservation of peace, democracy and the improvement of the conditions of the workers!" must become the basis of all future struggles in the present situation in Britain.

It needs to be strongly emphasized that there is no automatic coming to power of a Labour government. This demands on our part an end of all forms of passivity and "letting things take their own course."

In fighting to achieve this aim, we can under no circumstances create any illusions about the character of the present Labour program, nor can we accept responsibility for any actions a Labour government would carry out that are against the interests of the working class.

We are not putting the defeat of the National Government in the elections and its replacement by a Labour government as an end in itself, *but as the means to an end*, through which the class fight of the workers is intensified and advanced to a higher stage, through the victory achieved over the National Government on the basis of a united struggle to achieve the workers' immediate demands and retard the advance of fascism and war.

The Communist Party believes that its action corresponds with the desire of large sections of workers organized in the Labour Party, Trade Union Congress and Cooperative Party, who are sincerely desirous of removing any remaining obstacle towards developing a fighting united front against the attacks of the employers and in defence of all existing democratic rights and the preservation of peace. The Communist Party declares it is prepared to at once open up discussions with the Labour Party as to how unity in the labour movement in Britain can be achieved.

The Communist Party does not believe that socialism can be achieved through Parliament, and will always state this standpoint in its agitation and propaganda and will always maintain its international connections with working class parties in other countries which

maintain the revolutionary point of view. In fact the establishment of fascism in Germany, and in other countries, together with the victory of socialism in the Soviet Union, is convincing more and more workers in Britain that the revolutionary way is the only correct one. No party or federation which excludes sections of the working class which hold these views can claim to be a united front organization, embracing all the working class.

If, however, the Labour Party is prepared to accept revolutionary organizations as affiliated bodies—a step which we believe will be welcomed by the whole working class—then the Communist Party will be definitely prepared to affiliate with the Labour Party.

Within this common front, and on this basis, the Communist Party will loyally carry out all decisions and campaigns that advance the interests of the working class, and in which we have fully participated in working out. The Communist Party will demonstrate by the character of its work in the factories and working class localities its irrevocable and sincere determination to make every possible effort to secure the unification of the working class forces in Britain, against fascism and war. The past record of the Communist Party in the working class struggle is the best guarantee that it will fulfil this pledge.

But the complete realization of the objectives outlined, and the building up of this united front struggle, depends upon the revolutionary leadership and political role of the Communist Party at every stage of the fight. It depends especially on our being able to overcome the resistance of the Labour leaders to our united front proposals, by the way we can win the local Labour Parties, trade union branches, trades councils, and cooperative guilds for united action on the basis of the proposals and program we have set out.

The Communist Party of Great Britain now has the duty of bringing together in a People's Front every section of the working-class movement, the agricultural workers and all sections of the intelligentsia and professional classes, in fact all people who hate fascism and fear war, to join up in a common struggle against any further worsening of economic conditions and against fascism and war.

In this connection the Communist Party must utilize every means to organize the widespread opposition to war that exists in Britain so strikingly seen in the recent peace ballot, where in one form or another eleven million people expressed their opposition to war. Undoubtedly a similar result could be obtained in any similar organized vote against fascism.

The Communist Party can give real leadership to this movement and help it realize its objective of preventing war. The Communist Party must by its sympathetic understanding of the aims, desires, hopes and fears of those who took part in this peace ballot, be able to win political leadership over the masses in the peace movement, and draw them into the political struggle against fascism and war. (*Prolonged applause.*)

FLORIN: In Germany we see that monopoly capital has achieved a position of domination unparalleled in the history of imperialism. All small economic groups and all outsiders must submit to this domination. All foreign trade is subordinated to its political ends. The finance magnates are mobilizing the last resources and reserves for armament, for the aim they have set themselves, for an imperialist war of plunder.

With the aid of the compulsory agricultural organizations and by means of the enforced regulation of agricultural production and distribution, finance capital has been able to establish its domination over the scattered middle and small farms to an extent that could never have been possible before.

This compulsory capitalist-fascist economy yields increasing profits for the finance capitalists, but at the same time it means the ruthless despoliation of all other sections of the population.

It leads to the intensification of the fundamental class antagonisms, to increased vacillation in the ranks of the middle classes, to a decided temporary aggravation of difficulties in the camp of the bourgeoisie, while the fascist party is being constantly undermined and its totality endangered.

Just now we see anti-Jewish pogroms organized in Berlin and other German cities, an intensification of the terror against Catholic organizations and Protestant circles, a new big wave of terror, accompanied by bestial methods of torture and murder surpassing in cruelty anything known before.

At the same time it is characteristic that the terrorist pressure is now being applied with markedly increasing force also against all kinds of bourgeois opposition groups—the Stahlhelm, Conservatives, etc.

The general spirit of discontent with the Hitler regime is growing. Practically every measure taken by the regime arouses discontent and frequently meets with resistance, though so far it has been impossible to organize widespread resistance.

The mass basis of the fascist dictatorship can be destroyed and its

regime soon shaken, if the proletariat rallies its fighting strength, if a proletarian united front is established. The process of rallying and uniting the most active sections of the proletariat is already under way. At the same time, however, we must state that there is still a gap between the general discontent and the growing confidence in the Communist Party, on the one hand, and the ability of the Party to organize the united front and set it in motion, on the other. The gap can be bridged if in carrying out its tasks our organization builds up primarily its lower units and sets up efficient committees, and if the units and the committees display a maximum of initiative.

The main question that must be tackled in connection with the problem of overthrowing the fascist dictatorship in Germany is that of establishing such relations between our Party and the Social Democratic masses and their organizations as are in line with the new conditions.

In the Weimar era Social-Democracy in Germany was closely linked up with the machinery of the state, and as a result the lower committees were influenced and fettered by the policy of the bourgeoisie and tied to it with thousands of illusions. Under those conditions we had to work for a united front from the very bottom, by approaching individual members and lower functionaries of the Social-Democratic Party. This united front work was attended by grave defects and shortcomings.

Today the situation is quite different. The mentality of the Social-Democratic functionaries has undergone, and is still undergoing, a profound change. We must now approach the Social-Democratic organizations and committees again and again with proposals of cooperation, and work for the conclusion of agreements with them for special actions and for long periods.

The sectarian mistakes which we committed after the establishment of the Hitler dictatorship were due to the circumstance that in the new conditions, with the Social-Democratic Party illegal and a process of radical transformation going on among its members and functionaries, we were still guided to a certain extent by our appraisal of Social-Democracy which had been correct in the Weimar era, when that Party was linked up with the apparatus of the state.

As a result we committed two kinds of mistakes, both of a sectarian nature. On the one hand, we underestimated the real Leftward development in the ranks of the Social-Democratic Party, primarily among its functionaries; this gave rise to the opinion that we could not create a broad and organized united front. On the other hand,

there was a tendency to exaggerate this process of radicalization, and this led to the wrong tactic of concentrating primarily on the propaganda of our revolutionary doctrine.

We failed to see that after a considerable period of depression active Social-Democratic workers, members of the Reichsbanner, etc., had again begun to rally their organizations. We did not approach these organizations, and we did not raise before them the question of a united front policy on a new basis.

We registered quite correctly all the reactionary statements of the Prague Central Committee of the Social-Democratic Party. We cited the fact that it rejected the idea of a united front and made advances to the fascist dictatorship as proof that the Social-Democratic Party had remained the same as of old. At the same time we failed to take proper note of the process of revolutionization that was going on in the bosom of Social-Democracy, affecting the functionaries as well as the rank and file and extending even to the leadership.

In the beginning of this year, after having subjected our previous work to serious criticism, we turned towards the policy of a united front and People's Front, and inaugurated a change in our methods of work.

We have now adopted the policy of helping the Left and revolutionary elements in the Social-Democratic organizations—the workers and functionaries who are in favour of united action and a united front—in their fight against the Right elements of the Prague Central Committee, thus materializing a common fighting front.

There are instances of loose cooperation in factories developing into a firm united front which has extended to an entire factory and even further, to an entire district. In a number of cases the process of development from below has transcended the bounds of the local organizations and invaded larger domains.

A network of pacts and agreements, a network of united front committees, direct cooperation between all workers' organizations—this is the new type of organized united front we are aiming for.

We see that the process of revolutionary development among the Social-Democratic workers has been making considerable progress, particularly of late, as a result of the growing war danger and the increasing bestiality of the murderous Nazi terror, on the one hand, and under the influence of the peace policy of the Soviet Union and our united front policy, on the other. We can state that under the influence of the sentiments of the masses of the workers in Ger-

many even the Prague Central Committee of the Social-Democratic Party has begun to change its position on certain important questions.

From this platform of the international proletariat we again appeal to the reorganized Central Committee of the German Social-Democratic Party, and to each of its members, to conclude a united front agreement with us Communists in the present situation, even if it be only for a joint struggle against the terror.

In view of the example of France, where fascism is not in power, is it still necessary to prove the immeasurable importance of a united front agreement? In our country we experience daily the cruel terror of the fascist dictatorship. The bleeding German proletariat cries out for unity. It is the cry of every working man with the most elementary longing for liberty stirring in his heart. It will be on the pace at which the united front will develop that the overthrow of the Hitler dictatorship will depend. We say to the Left leaders that every delay, every hesitation on their part, prolongs the tortures and sufferings of the proletariat and delays its emancipation. The Left Social-Democratic leaders must also know that by their assertions that we are executing a manœuvre they are actually helping the Right opponents of the united front within the Social-Democratic Party to persist in their conservatism.

If the Social-Democratic functionaries, particularly the Lefts, fear that we want to oust them in the end, we tell them that the establishment of the organizational unity of the working class in a revolutionary party on the basis of Marxism presupposes proletarian democracy from top to bottom.

Some Left German Social-Democratic leaders have written: If we want to form a united front, we must first have a program. Our reply is: The fight for peace, liberty and bread is a program. The fight against fascism for the democratic rights of the people is a program. This should be clear to everyone. But we are always ready to enter into new negotiations and to make quite specific proposals for a common fighting program which will be acceptable to all the organizations joining the united front and the People's Front.

While the central question of the formation of a united front depends on our relations with the Social-Democratic Party, we do not confine our efforts for a united front to the Social-Democratic Party. We are also striving for a united front with the Catholic workers' societies and with the Christian trade union workers, who still maintain a certain amount of contact with one another.

We must strive for concrete agreements with the Catholic comrades

for the defence of the semi-religious workers' organizations; and if, despite the struggle, it proves impossible for them to maintain their legality, we must propose to these workers that they unite with us and carry on an organized struggle within the fascist organizations.

There are widespread oppositional and, indeed, militant tendencies among the youth in Germany. This shows that there exist the prerequisites for the creation of a wide oppositional youth movement embracing all the discontented sections of the youth.

Our comrades have been wont to look upon work in the "Labour Front" as unworthy of a Communist; they have believed that the workers would regard them as traitors to the cause of the proletariat if they engaged in such work.

We now have the beginnings of a turn in this sphere. So far we have been speaking but hesitatingly of utilizing semi-legal and legal opportunities, instead of declaring boldly and openly that work inside the fascist mass organizations must become our principal method of work.

Our adherents would not hesitate a single day if it were a question of an opportunity of getting thousands of our comrades into posts of non-commissioned officers in the German army. Why, then, do we still hesitate when it comes to the question of carrying on a real and skilful fight for obtaining the lower posts in the fascist mass organizations? In this question, too, we must discard all the formulations that have hampered our work in the past.

This policy may give rise to the danger of Right errors. But fear of the Right danger can be no reason for displaying fear in carrying out a correct policy. Our Party must learn to combine constant propagation of the teachings of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin with the ability to apply these teachings in its policy of a united front and People's Front.

Experience has shown that upon their accession to power the fascists do not simply cast off their anti-capitalist trumperies, but go on using them for purposes of social demagogy, particularly at times when they are facing increasing difficulties.

They boast of having achieved by a few enactments what the "Marxists" could not bring about in the course of fifteen years; namely, of having abolished the supremacy of capitalism, thus eliminating every cause for a class struggle. That is why—they maintain—all further class struggle must be punished as an anti-social crime directed against the united national community which is now supposed to exist.

At this very moment, when our Congress is in session, the fascists in Germany are compelled by the growing discontent of the masses and the increasing differences in the camp of the bourgeoisie to veil their policy of enemies of the people with threats hurled at supposedly crushed reaction, which is again raising its head.

This anti-capitalist phrase-mongering is a dangerous weak spot of the regime, and may become an explosive that will blow it up once we learn to work in the fascist mass organizations and to use their own phrases against the fascists.

As against the slogan of the so-called "second revolution" we mechanically set up the slogan of the proletarian revolution, instead of seizing upon the "second revolution" sentiments of the storm troops and the members of the Labour Front and, by working inside their organizations, directing these sentiments along the right channels and towards the right aim.

The events of June 30 have shown that as long as we are outside the fascist mass organizations, we are unable to exercise any decisive influence upon the opposition movements in these organizations.

The anti-capitalist phrase-mongering of the fascists is supplemented by a complete system of social demagogy which is applied with great dexterity. "Strength Through Joy," Winter Relief, "Beautification of the Working Place," Courts of Honour, are some of the methods of this demagogy.

Here also it is not enough simply to characterize these methods as a fraud, but we must use them as a means of activizing the workers. We must convert them into legitimate demands for all, which must be fought for, as against the unseemly practice of handing out gifts to individuals.

Social demagogy has always been a weapon in the hands of the fascists in their fight against our class, a means used by them for the purpose of disarming the proletariat. Let us do our utmost to make their social demagogy act as a boomerang against themselves.

The national demagogy of the fascists crowns—in a manner of speaking—their anti-capitalist phrase-mongering and social demagogy.

The German fascists do not deny that their anti-capitalist and social measures are inadequate; but they lay the blame for this on the Versailles treaty and its results, on machinations of international "Jewish" capital, on the curtailment of exports, on the lack of raw materials and colonial markets. They try to explain it by the want of space from which the German people is allegedly suffering.

Moreover, fascism tries—and not always without success—to utilize

the discontent arising from social causes to promote its chauvinist propaganda, by representing its predatory imperialist policy as a social cause of the masses.

This is the reason for the apparently contradictory fact that while the reactionary social policy of fascism is arousing growing discontent among the masses, there is also a temporarily growing wave of chauvinism.

Not only the sections of the population that follow the fascist regime, but also some sections of the working class have been caught in the wave of chauvinism. True, the class antagonisms, exploitation and oppression prevent the chauvinist ideas from becoming firmly implanted in the masses; but they do not prevent the temporary extension of the wave of chauvinism.

Chauvinism must be fought in all its manifestations and nuances. As the first prerequisite for this struggle, we must constantly expose the fascist policy as leading to the catastrophe of war.

As a second prerequisite, we Communists must root out the Social-Democratic theory, which has wide currency in Germany, that fascism can be overthrown only in a war and with aid from outside. This is expressed in a desire, cherished even by some workers in their revolutionary impatience, for a war to break out soon; and as a result such workers do not carry on a sufficiently serious struggle against the fascist warmongers and against the chauvinist incitement of the masses.

As a third prerequisite, our Communist organization must always and constantly expose the dangerous duplicity of the fascist leaders in the field of diplomacy, which finds its most glaring expression in the contradiction between the peace talk of the top leadership and the open war propaganda of the lower officials in the depraved hierarchy.

As internationalists we can link up our struggle against chauvinism with the national feelings of the German people, explaining to them that the greatness of a people must be measured by its freedom.

It is disgraceful for a German workingman to accept his disfranchisement patiently.

We demand worker and popular control over the expenditure of funds by organizations and municipalities. We demand the right to participate in shaping the general policy of our nation.

In these and similar terms we can formulate the demands of the workers and all working people in every sphere, never forgetting

that we must link up these demands with the material interests of the working people.

This road will bring us to an anti-fascist People's Front.

Whenever the difficulties of the regime in Germany mount, whenever the working people express their discontent in various demands, whenever the differences within the fascist party become accentuated—savage pogroms are perpetrated against the Jews. It is a means of instilling terror and docility. The anti-Jewish pogroms are organized and carried out by the National-Socialist party organizations and government institutions. The will of the people is counterfeited and perverted.

We Communists are friends of all the oppressed, and thus also of the Jews in Germany; and lately we have often been able to organize direct actions against the pogroms. In this we have wide support among all decent people. The fight against the bestial anti-Jewish pogroms can find effective support in the solidarity of all humanitarian people throughout the world.

The condition of the middle classes has gone from bad to worse under fascism. They are profoundly disillusioned, in part desperate, and in their discontent they are looking for a new orientation. It is we who must give them this new orientation.

In this sphere our work in Germany suffers from the greatest defects. We have proclaimed the slogan of an anti-fascist People's Front, but we have made no headway along this line. The power irradiated by a proletarian united front will attract the labouring middle classes, as has been shown by the example of our brother Party in France.

We must boldly and courageously approach all the organizations that are opposed to the regime. We must make the millions of Catholic working people, who see a decisive blow to their interests and rights in the suppression of the Catholic youth organizations and press and in the persecution of the Catholic journeymen's societies and Catholic priests, realize that in the fight against fascist violence we are on their side.

It will be impossible to create an anti-fascist People's Front in Germany unless we correctly approach the question of the fight of the Church and of the Catholic opposition.

Should the struggle of the Catholic men, women, and youth remain confined to religious differences, and not be waged for the political aim of overthrowing the fascist dictatorship, its effect may prove disruptive to their cause and, as a result, the Hitlers, Rosenbergs

and Streichers will be the gainers. That is why we Communists must establish contact with these masses.

We must utilize the Agricultural Aid organizations and our meetings with workers in the forced labour camps, in the army, etc., in order to again install our representatives, supporters and loose groups in the villages, working for the re-establishment of our village organizations so as to secure real leadership of the peasant opposition elements inside the peasant organizations.

Even the most difficult conditions of illegality must not deter us from showing the intellectuals, the scientists and artists, that we, the fighters for the revolutionary emancipation of the working class, are also the best fighters in the cause of culture and progress.

In order to give the working people suffering under the oppression of the fascist regime a real perspective, we Communists declare:

1. We are ready to join hands with all those who strive for the overthrow of the Nazi regime;

2. We are in favour of an alliance with all sections of the population and all organizations that are willing to join in an anti-fascist People's Front for the overthrow of the fascist dictatorship.

The immediate aim around which we can rally and bring into motion all those sections of the population and the organizations which are not yet prepared to go further is the struggle for the democratic rights and liberties of the people.

The terror stirs up an elementary feeling of mass solidarity. This mass feeling, this urge for mutual assistance, is an important starting point for the united front and the People's Front.

On many occasions we have come across two abstract notions concerning the overthrow of the Hitler dictatorship.

According to one notion, the overthrow of the Hitler government will cause the immediate overthrow of the capitalist system. It is our revolutionary will to bring about such a development. But to proclaim this beforehand as the only possibility involves the danger of restricting beforehand the policy of a People's Front for the overthrow of the Hitler government.

According to the other notion, a sort of Kerensky period will inevitably follow the overthrow of the Hitler dictatorship. This is just as wrong. This notion harbours the danger that we may gloss over the class lines and fail of a really revolutionary orientation towards the middle classes—that we may overlook the fact that the middle classes will also have to be our allies in the overthrow of capitalism.

We must strive for the first, but must at the same time bear in mind the other eventuality.

As strongly as Dimitrov defended the honour of our Party before the bloodstained court at Leipzig, and as honourable as it is for our German Party to have the International confer on our imprisoned Ernst Thaelmann the title of Honorary Chairman of the Seventh World Congress, so proud are we of the ties linking us with the Communist International and with the great leader of the world proletariat, Comrade Stalin. (*Applause.*)

GIL GREEN: Comrades, the masterly report made by Comrade Dimitrov, whose name enjoys the profoundest love and respect of the working youth, is of great importance for the work of our Party in the United States.

In the U.S.A. we are witnessing the beginning of a sharp struggle for the youth. Never before has the bourgeoisie been so active in its efforts to win the youth; never has it been so alarmed over the multiplying signs of political consciousness and political activity among the youth. The American youth knows that it lives in the richest country in the world. The initiative has passed to the anti-fascist youth, which has united its forces, has elaborated a broader program, and has a wider appeal for the young generation. It is properly utilizing the rich revolutionary traditions of the American people; recognizes the natural love of the youth for their native country and connects with it the necessity of wresting the country and its wealth from the hands of the magnates of finance; and through all this inspires and activizes the youth to an ever increasing extent.

Still, we must not overestimate these factors, no matter how important they may be. We are also confronted with numerous difficulties. The united front has not yet been consolidated and has not taken root in the decisive masses of the youth. The large mass of the young people who are represented in the united front have still to be won for its program. Besides, American capitalism still has many opportunities for manœuvring.

At the same time it is beyond doubt that the growth of the anti-fascist united front will, in its turn, lead to a certain consolidation of the forces of reaction and fascism. So far their forces have been scattered. But there can be no doubt of the fact that constant attempts are being made to amalgamate them. The reactionary forces are intensifying their demagogic appeals to the youth, as is already evidenced in the movements of Huey Long and Father Coughlin.

A year ago, when we found out that a fascist group had sent out a call for a youth congress in order to gain support for a reactionary program, we effected our first serious break with sectarianism. In common with other anti-fascist youth organizations we inflicted a defeat on the enemy and turned this youth congress into a broad united front for the struggle for the immediate demands of the youth.

In this connection it becomes very important for the entire Young Communist International to arrive at a correct appraisal of the mass organizations of the youth that are controlled or influenced by the bourgeoisie. Our Young Communists must join these organizations, not with the object of breaking them up or weakening them, but with the object of transforming them from centres of bourgeois influence into centres of the united front fight and of proletarian influence.

Another problem of great importance is that of our attitude to the leadership of the Socialist youth. The proposed resolution speaks of the necessity of a differentiated approach to the various groups and individuals in the Socialist leadership. The leading forces of the Socialist youth, who have joined the movement in the past years of the crisis, reflect to a certain extent the growing militancy of the masses, and many of them can be won for the united front and even for Communism.

This is still something that must be realized by our entire Young Communist League. The fact that we have found the correct approach to the student youth largely explains why it has been possible to organize splendid united front actions in this sphere.

In building up a broad popular movement we will have to pay serious attention to the question of a correct approach to the non-proletarian sections.

In any event it must be clear to us that the farther the united front of the youth penetrates into the middle classes, the deeper and more firmly must we sink our roots among the proletarian youth, primarily among the young industrial workers. In the last three years the working youth of the U.S.A. has played an extremely active part in the strike waves and in the struggles of the unemployed, and the activity of the young workers has also been growing in the trade unions. We must create a strong backbone for our united front among these young workers in industry, and through their activity secure the proletarian hegemony in this movement. We have tackled this problem in the last few months, with the result that 150 trade unions and six important central trade union bodies took part in the Second American Youth Congress.

If we do not learn to develop wider forms of activity and engage in comprehensive training work, it may only lead to the politically advanced becoming separated from the politically backward masses. This must not be. Such things as the tendency towards exaggeration on the part of some of our comrades and lower units, the tendency to claim all the credit for the realization of united front actions, the tendency to ignore the views of other young people and to repel such young people instead of drawing them into the leadership, etc., are precisely those small sectarian mistakes which, as experience has taught us, give an appearance of justification to the charge of our opponents that the Communists are out to dominate the united front and that their proposals for united action are insincere.

At the Second American Youth Congress the Communist delegation faced a number of complicated problems, each of which might have led to a break in the united front had we not been broad-minded about them. For instance, the question of religion. Many religious young people were sceptical of unity with the Communists, because they were afraid it was only a trap, and that we intended to foist our atheist views on them. We solved this problem simply by conceding all the religious young people the right to hold religious services every Sunday morning. This did not in the least compromise the Communist youth, and at the same time it showed the masses of the religious youth that it was not a question of a united front against religion, but against reaction.

It was only in the course of this united front movement that we Young Communists began to realize Comrade Dimitrov's suggestion that the Communists must not only teach the masses, but also learn from them.

New ideas must become welcome and frequent guests in the ranks of our Young Communist Leagues; otherwise we shall not be able to develop a mass youth movement.

In conclusion I should like to remind the Congress of Comrade Lenin's words to the Russian Bolsheviks in 1905:

"It is a time of war. The youth will decide the issue of the entire struggle—both the student youth and, still more, the working-class youth."¹

Thirty years have elapsed since that time. But I know of no other words that could express more pointedly the urgent necessity of win-

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Russian edition, Vol. VII.

ning the youth of today for the fight against the offensive of fascism and for socialism. (*Applause.*)

LINDEROT: Comrade Dimitrov has pointed out in his speech several characteristic features of the situation in the Scandinavian countries.

In Sweden, as well as in Norway and Denmark, Social-Democracy holds the power of government in its hands. The Scandinavian countries are the trump card of Social-Democracy against the Communist International and the Soviet Union. Since today not even the leaders of the Socialist Labour International dare dispute the socialist achievements of the Soviet Union, they seek consolation in "Nordic Socialism," which is supposed to prove that, in spite of everything, the Socialist Labour International has been right; that, in spite of everything, it is possible to bring about socialism in Western Europe along the so-called peaceful road, according to the old prescription of reformism, on the basis of bourgeois democracy, and with the capitalist state as a "socialist" means of power.

Now, what is this "Nordic Socialism"? Whereas in the Soviet Union tremendous historic socialist victories in all spheres of social life have been achieved during this period, whereas here we see the tremendous development of the democratic rule of the worker and peasant masses proceeding on the basis of socialism, the course of development in Sweden during this period has proceeded in a diametrically opposite direction.

All the old privileges of the bourgeoisie have remained intact; all the class contradictions exist as before; the reactionary election regulations—a minimum age requirement of respectively 23 and 27 years and a tax qualification for certain election rights—are maintained unchanged; the monarchy and the church receive homage as precious national traditions.

New anti-democratic class laws have been introduced. The powers of the police have been considerably extended; each police chief has received the right to organize armed secret police troops in addition to the official police.

In its foreign policy, the Social-Democratic government supports the powers that are taking the lead in organizing an imperialist war against the Soviet Union, and consistently refuses to lend any support to the peace policy of the Soviet Union. With the connivance of the government, Hitler Germany has been in control of large war plants in Sweden, such as the aircraft plant in Malmö and the textile mill in Landskrona.

In its crisis policy, the Social-Democratic government has had no scruples about supporting big business and individual capitalists. It is a fact that in all wage disputes and strikes the government has exercised its authority and set the capitalist state machinery in motion against the workers.

In its agrarian policy, the government has supported the rich peasants and big landowners, while the small, poor peasants have been left practically without any assistance.

The Social-Democratic Party apparatus, the party press, and the reformist trade union leadership have supported this policy of the government with the result that the standard of living of the worker masses has been lowered, while the profits of the capitalists have been mounting.

The peaceful socialization which Social-Democracy promised has so far been confined to the Social-Democratic government's "socializing" the debts of the enterprises which became bankrupt as a result of the collapse of the Kreuger concern.

Such is the real face of the much extolled "Nordic Socialism."

Its only consequences have been the social and political arming of the bourgeoisie and its class forces, on the one hand, and the systematic disarming of the working class, on the other.

Comrade Dimitrov is absolutely right in saying that the existence of a Social-Democratic government must not stop the Communists from seeking to establish contact with the Social-Democratic workers and to win them for united action. If we pursue correct tactics, it should be entirely possible to establish a united front with the Social-Democratic workers.

By taking up the slogans and watchwords which Social-Democracy popularized among the workers at the time when it was still an opposition party, by speaking to the Social-Democratic workers in a matter-of-fact and comradely way of the possibility of attaining success in the struggle for these demands if we act in unity, our Party will succeed in rapidly building up a united front for the struggle for the everyday interests of the workers, and in developing this unity into an anti-fascist and anti-capitalist fighting front embracing the broad masses of Social-Democratic workers.

It is easy to show that the policy pursued by the Social-Democratic leadership is paving the way for fascism. Of course, the National-Socialist organizations are still far from being mass organizations. So far National-Socialism has been prevented from gaining a foothold among the workers. But it is a fact that National-Socialism

has gained ground, and it would be a mistake to underestimate the danger which the Swedish Hitlerite bandits represent. However, even more dangerous than the latter are the fascist organizations which parade under other names.

Does it follow from what I have said that for the near future a united front based on an agreement with the Social-Democratic leaders is entirely out of the question in Sweden? No, it would be wrong to take such a fatalistic attitude. We have heard from Comrade Thorez that under the pressure of the masses Social-Democratic leaders who had resolutely opposed collaboration with the Communists have become just as resolute supporters of the united front.

This, however, is not the most important question. What is much more important is the growing desire for unity among the broad masses. This desire finds its expression also in the growing opposition within the Social-Democratic Party, an opposition which a number of prominent leaders of Social-Democracy have already joined.

There is an increasingly apparent process of differentiation going on in Swedish Social-Democracy. As a result, two wings have been coming to the fore in Swedish Social-Democracy: the Right wing, which relies for support on certain elements of the labour aristocracy and on bourgeois elements, and the Left wing, which has its basis in the broad masses and which is adjusting its policy to follow the line of the proletarian class front.

It is primarily the trade unions, where the masses are concentrated, that are already prepared for united action with the Communists today, and that are sure to become tomorrow staunch adherents of a proletarian united front for the struggle against fascism, war and the capitalist offensive. In Sweden the question of the struggle against fascism, the question of a proletarian united front, is most closely linked up with the question of our work in the trade union organizations. In most branches of industry the workers of Sweden are a hundred per cent organized in the trade unions.

In other sectors of our front of struggle against fascism, as, for instance, in our work among women, we must also seriously strive to get rid of the sectarian methods which have characterized our work in the past.

The way the question of the youth has been dealt with is particularly gratifying. It is high time a real change in the work in this sphere were effected.

The general rule which Comrade Dimitrov has emphasized, to the effect that we must be flexible in adapting our work to the objective

conditions in the various countries, is also a prerequisite for extending the influence of our Parties to the intellectuals, the urban middle classes, and the labouring peasants in the countryside. The clear manner in which the Congress has dealt with the national question, and the broad basis which has been proposed for the work of our Parties in the countryside, will open up a new wide road for us to the masses of the rural population. This is also a major task in the struggle against fascism. (*Applause.*)

TWENTY-SECOND SITTING

(August 5, 1935)

ENGELS IN THE STRUGGLE FOR REVOLUTIONARY MARXISM

Opening 6 p. m.

Presiding: Pieck

PIECK: Today's sitting is dedicated to the commemoration of the fortieth anniversary of the death of Frederick Engels. Comrade Manuilsky has the floor.

(Comrade Manuilsky is greeted with stormy applause, rising to a prolonged ovation. Delegates and guests rise; cries of "Rot Front!" "Banzai" "Hurrah!" The delegations in turn sing their revolutionary songs, the singing is followed by a new ovation and cheers. All sing the "Internationale." Comrade Manuilsky begins his speech amidst continued stormy applause.)

Speech by Comrade Manuilsky

ENGELS IN THE STRUGGLE FOR REVOLUTIONARY MARXISM

1. ENGELS AND HIS ROLE IN THE CREATION OF SCIENTIFIC SOCIALISM

Frederick Engels—Karl Marx's closest comrade-in-arms, one of the greatest revolutionary thinkers in human history, organizer and leader of the international proletarian party—died forty years ago. The names of Marx and Engels will forever remain in the memories of the peoples as the names of two great geniuses, of the creators of scientific socialism and the founders of the international communist movement.

The revolutionary activities of Engels are inseparably bound up with the life and activities of Marx.

Forty years ago Lenin wrote:

"Ancient legends tell of various touching examples of friendship. The European proletariat may say that its science was created by two scholars and fighters, whose relations surpass all the most touching tales of the ancients concerning human friendship."¹

The fortieth anniversary of the death of Engels which we are commemorating today coincides with the change that has occurred in the world labour movement, with the turn—caused by the influence of the victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R. and the very profound crisis of capitalism—which the broad masses of the Social-Democratic and non-party workers have taken towards communism, and with the accelerated collapse of the Second International.

The victory of the proletariat in the U.S.S.R. and the growth of the Communist movement all over the world are the direct result of the fact that the Bolshevik Party, the international party of Lenin and Stalin, has remained loyal to the end to the teachings of Marx and Engels.

The collapse of the Second International, the defeat and bankruptcy of its parties, are the historically inevitable consequence of their desertion from the doctrines of Marx and Engels, of their vulgarization and distortion of Marxism. Millions of working people—gripped in the clutches of the crisis, tormented on the gallows of fascism, incarcerated in fascist jails and lying in the trenches of the imperialist wars that are flaring up—are now paying for this desertion.

The opportunists of all shades in the Second International—Bernstein, Cunow, Kautsky, Vandervelde and others like them—accused Engels of all mortal sins and opposed Marx to Engels in their effort to "refute" both, their real object being to deprive Marxism of its revolutionary spirit. It was not an accident, it was inevitable, and absolutely in keeping with the laws of development, that the *revisionists in the Second International*, who first fought precisely against Engels on all the fundamental questions of theory and practice, passed to the position of collaboration with the bourgeoisie and gradually slipped into the mire of reaction.

From the very outset of his revolutionary activities Engels, together with Marx, waged a fight to lay the foundations of and to develop scientific socialism *in the sphere of economics and the social sciences, in the sphere of philosophy and natural science*; he waged a struggle

to permeate the minds of the proletarian masses with revolutionary Marxism as widely as possible.

In the struggle against the German "true" Socialists, those sentimental "high priests of human justice and right," those pompous prophets of "class peace" and "peace among the peoples" in capitalist society, those pseudo-pacifists and supine humanitarians, Engels taught the proletarian masses ruthless hatred for the class enemy; he called for a complete rupture with the class enemy and its ideological lackeys—the priests, the lawyers and the parliamentarians.

Engels fought furiously against the *Lassalleans*, the "royal Prussian socialists" who licked the jackboots of Bismarck, and their "state superstition," their idealistic prejudices and profuse talk about "general human rights," and their "iron law of wages" which denied the necessity of independent economic struggle and independent industrial organization of the working class. Upholding and popularizing Marx's political economy and emphasizing the inseparable connection that exists between the economic and political struggle of the proletariat, Engels exposed the reformist nature of Lassalleanism, its adaptation to the Junker-bourgeois state, its betrayal of the proletarian revolution.

In opposition to *Proudhonism and Bakunism*, these petty-bourgeois, reactionary, utopian, anarchist trends in the labour movement, which for the mass revolutionary struggle substituted phrases about "mutual aid by means of peaceful cooperation," "the equality of classes," "the destruction of all states," Engels urged the necessity of a political party of the proletariat, of a political struggle for the dictatorship of the working class.

In the struggle against all *pseudo-Socialist and pseudo-revolutionary theories*, Engels, on the basis of Marx's analysis of the economic relationships of bourgeois society, proved the inevitability of the violent overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the world historical role of the proletariat as the grave-digger of capitalism and the creator of the new socialist system. Together with Marx, Engels proved that the class struggle leads to the dictatorship of the proletariat, as the state form of the transition period from capitalism to communism, and that without the leadership of its own independent political party the proletariat cannot achieve victory in this struggle.

Engels combined a genuinely scientific analysis that penetrated the very core of historical phenomena, of economic and political processes, with the burning passion of a leader and teacher of the proletariat who called upon the masses of the workers to enter the revolutionary struggle. Scientific socialism illuminates the whole past, present and

future of human society, it shows the proletariat what the exploited and enslaved classes were before it, what it is itself, and what it must become. Hence, Engels taught the workers: act in accordance with this revolutionary theory, fight for the proletarian dictatorship, and your emancipation will mean the emancipation of all humanity, the end of all exploitation, oppression and violence!

This idea of the unity of revolutionary theory and revolutionary action runs like a red thread through all Engels' scientific works, through all his polemical articles and his party directives.

In the sphere of *political economy* Engels formulated the inevitable law of all exploiting societies that:

"All progress in production is simultaneously regression in the position of the oppressed class, i.e., of the overwhelming majority. All good for some is simultaneously evil for others; every new emancipation of one class means the new enslavement of other classes."¹

This inherent contradiction of exploiting society finds most striking expression under *capitalism*. The living vehicle of this contradiction is the proletariat, the class that is bereft of all means of production, and is, therefore, the most revolutionary class among all the exploited classes that history has ever known. Engels said:

"By more and more transforming the great majority of the population into proletarians, the capitalist mode of production brings into being the force which, under penalty of its own destruction, is compelled to carry out this revolution."²

In one of his earliest works Engels depicts the conditions of the working class under capitalism in a manner that is amazing for its stern veracity. Over ninety years have passed since that work was written. Read this description to any worker in any capitalist country; he will see himself and the fate to which capitalism dooms him as if reflected in a mirror.

"When one individual inflicts bodily injury upon another, such injury that death results, we call the deed manslaughter; when the assailant knew in advance that the injury would be fatal, we call this deed murder. But when society places hundreds of proletarians in such a position that they inevitably meet a too early and an

¹ F. Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, Chapter IX.

² F. Engels, *Herr Eugen Dühring's Revolution in Science (Anti-Dühring)*.

unnatural death, one which is quite as much a death by violence as that by the sword or bullet; when it deprives thousands of the necessities of life, places them under conditions in which they *cannot* live—forces them, through the strong arm of the law, to remain in such conditions until that death ensues which is the inevitable consequence—knows that these thousands of victims must perish, and yet permits these conditions to remain, its deed is murder just as surely as the deed of the single individual; disguised, malicious murder, murder against which none can defend himself, which does not seem what it is, because no man sees the murderer, because the death of the victim seems a natural one....”¹

Under capitalism, tools, machines and the land confront the worker as an alien and hostile force. The supreme manifestation of this antagonism are the periodical crises which shake the exploiting system to its foundations and reveal to the ruling classes their inability to govern with the aid of the forces which they themselves called into being, forces which rage like blind elements over the whole of mankind, devastate flourishing countries, towns and villages and doom millions of people to degeneration and death.

Engels showed that the development of the proletariat, whose conditions of life impel it towards the social revolution, and the development of the productive forces, which have outgrown the framework of capitalist society, must inevitably burst this framework, must lead to the social revolution.

In this connection Marx and Engels advanced the “immediate ultimate aim” of overthrowing the power of the bourgeoisie and of establishing the dictatorship of the proletariat. This is the core of Marxism.

In the struggle for revolutionary Marxism, Engels with the utmost clarity worked out the problem of the interaction between economics and politics throughout the history of social development; and on this basis he worked out the problem of the nature of the state of the exploiting classes. In a brilliant draft he also depicted the general outlines of socialist construction.

Engels’ profound analysis embracing the whole of so-called “civilization,” that is, of the history of the exploiting classes and their states, leads to the conclusion that the disappearance of classes and of the

¹ F. Engels, *The Condition of the Working Class in England in 1844*, Chapter V.

state is as necessary historically as has been their rise and development until now. Engels wrote:

"We are now rapidly approaching the stage of development of production in which the existence of classes has not only ceased to be necessary, but has actually become a hindrance to production."¹

We know what a furious howl, what frenzy and rage this proposition of Marxism that classes and the state must inevitably disappear called forth and still calls forth among all the paid advocates of the bourgeois system and bourgeois property, and how idiotically all the Bernsteins and Kautskys, who regard the slightly varnished and slightly reformed bourgeois state as the highest achievement of human progress, have failed to understand it.

In his struggle against the Social-Democratic opportunists and against the anarchists, Engels *put in the forefront the question of the dictatorship of the proletariat*, and, in particular, the question of the radical difference between the exploiters' state and the proletarian state. The revolutionary Marxian doctrine of the state and revolution and, in particular, Engels' remarkable outlines on the question of *proletarian democracy* as opposed to bourgeois democracy, have been brilliantly developed in the works of *Lenin* and *Stalin*.

What irrefutable confirmation of the correctness of the Marxist-Leninist doctrine of the state as the organ of the exploiting classes for the purpose of keeping the exploited classes in subjection obtained precisely at the present time, in the midst of the advance of reaction and fascism in the capitalist countries! How shamefully the lying tales of the Social-Democratic philistines about the state "expressing the common interests of the people," conciliating the interests of antagonistic classes, and standing above those classes, have been scattered to the winds! And what confirmation is obtained today, particularly in fascist countries, of what Engels said about the state being the armed forces: the police, the army, the prisons and the courts. The fascist landknechts of finance capital, the Gestapo, Hitler's and Goering's defence corps, the fascist dungeons, the concentration camps and the scaffold—all these reveal the very essence of the exploiters' state, which is throwing off the tinsel of bourgeois democracy, which is trampling upon the last remnants of the democratic rights and liberties won by the working people by long years of

¹ F. Engels, *The Origin of the Family, Private Property and the State*, Chapter IX.

sanguinary struggle. And in the face of these inexorable facts, what will those say today who, debasing and distorting Marxism, repudiated the path of the proletarian revolution, and in conjunction with Noske and Severing, defended the bourgeois state against the attacks of the revolutionary masses?

Opposing the dictatorship of the proletariat to the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, Marx and Engels fought all their lives for the creation of a party that could lead the masses to the seizure of power and the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship. After the Paris Commune all Engels' utterances on the question of the immediate and urgent tasks of the proletariat in the socialist revolution were directed towards one point, *viz.*, to utilize the experience of the Paris Commune which was to lie at the basis of the program of the new mass parties of the proletariat. Not long before his death, on the twentieth anniversary of the Paris Commune, Engels wrote:

"Of late the Social-Democratic philistine has once more been filled with wholesome terror at the words: *dictatorship of the proletariat*. Well and good, gentlemen, do you want to know what this dictatorship looks like? Look at the Paris Commune. That was the dictatorship of the proletariat."¹

The Bolshevik Party alone, as far back as 1903, included the demand for the dictatorship of the proletariat in its program. After quoting what Marx and Engels had said on the experience of the Paris Commune, Lenin, in 1917, wrote:

"In revising the program of our Party we must unfailingly take the advice of Engels and Marx into consideration in order to come nearer the truth, to restore Marxism by purging it of distortions, to direct the struggle of the working class for its emancipation more correctly."²

The Bolsheviks alone, led by Lenin and Stalin, supplementing the experience of the Paris Commune with the rich experience of two Russian revolutions, put forward the creation of a state of the "Commune type" as the immediate aim of the proletarian revolution, and succeeded in leading vast masses of the proletariat and of the poorest peasants towards breaking up the bourgeois state and establishing the proletarian dictatorship in the *form of Soviets*.

Engels said that the class struggle of the proletariat would assume

¹ F. Engels, *Introduction to Marx's "Civil War in France."*

² V. I. Lenin, "The State and Revolution", *Selected Works*, Vol. VII.

its widest dimensions when the proletariat captured power and, by means of its dictatorship, set to work radically to remould all production relationships.

Today, on one-sixth of the globe, in irreconcilable revolutionary struggle, in the great laboratory of socialist labour and thought, under the leadership of *Lenin* and *Stalin*, creative Marxism has been day after day assuming and continues to assume world historical dimensions. The victorious proletariat is making the epoch of which Engels said:

"The proletariat seizes the public power, and by means of this power transforms the socialized means of production, slipping from the hands of the bourgeoisie, into public property. By this act, the proletariat frees the means of production from the character of capital hitherto borne by them, and gives their social character complete freedom to assert itself. Social production upon a predetermined plan now becomes possible."¹

The Bolsheviks have done that. They have expropriated the capitalists and the landlords, removed the shackles of capital from the material productive forces and from the greatest creative force in history, the proletariat, and in place of capitalist anarchy they have established the socialist plan.

Engels wrote:

"The appropriation by society of the means of production will put an end not only to the artificial restraints on production which exist today, but also to the positive waste and destruction of productive forces and products which is now the inevitable accompaniment of production and reaches its zenith in crises. Further, it sets free for society as a whole a mass of means of production and products by putting an end to the senseless luxury and extravagance of the present ruling class and its political representatives."²

The Bolsheviks have done that. As a result of the socialist reconstruction of national economy, crises and unemployment have been abolished forever in the land of the victorious proletariat; the exploiting, parasitic classes have been eliminated and there is no place for the senseless waste of products. The socialist system has undivided sway in the country.

¹ F. Engels, *Socialism: Utopian and Scientific*.

² F. Engels, *Herr Eugen Dühring's Revolution in Science (Anti-Dühring)*.

Engels spoke of a system of organization of production under which no one will be able to throw on the shoulders of others his share in productive labour and in which, on the other hand, productive labour, instead of being a means to the subjection of man, will become a means to their emancipation.¹

The Bolsheviks have done that. Instead of a curse, as it was under capitalism, labour in the Land of Socialism has become a matter of *honour, glory and heroism*; in the great school of socialist emulation new forms of collective labour are arising.

The Bolsheviks are putting into practice the brilliant outlines of Marx and Engels on the necessity of abolishing the antithesis between town and country, on the planned distribution of the productive forces, on creating the prerequisites for the all-round, mental and physical development of men and women. But the Party and non-Party Bolsheviks are putting these amazingly prophetic outlines into practice concretely, enriching them with the creative ideas of the most brilliant minds of modern times, of *Lenin* and *Stalin*—and they are filling them with the living experience of the revolutionary struggle of the masses.

Engels said that those whose mission it will be to raze exploiting society to the ground and to erect classless, socialist society will possess exceptional power of theoretical foresight and iron will.

It was our Party, the Party of the Bolsheviks led by *Lenin* and *Stalin*, that Engels with his penetrating eye saw through the veil of the ensuing decades! (*Loud applause.*)

It was those millions who have built socialism in the land of the proletarian dictatorship that he spoke of.

This signifies the entry in the historical arena of those who will achieve the great goal outlined by *Marx* and *Engels* all over the globe.

II. ENGELS AS LEADER OF THE PROLETARIAT AND MASTER OF PROLETARIAN TACTICS.

Engels was not only a great theoretician of the proletariat. Like Marx, he was primarily a *revolutionary*. As was the case with Marx, Engels' real element was first of all the *struggle*—the persistent, consistent, passionate struggle *for communism*.

The first half of the 'forties. Young Engels spreads his wings. He abandons the Christian-Prussian philistine environment and beats a

¹ *Ibid.*

path for himself towards proletarian socialism. He meets Marx with whom he concludes a fighting alliance—the great bond of union between the two geniuses of proletarian communism. Together they organize and lead the Communist League; together they draw up the famous *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, the first program document of international communism.

The revolution of 1848. Engels is one of the editors of the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung* on which, in conjunction with Marx, he supports the extreme Left wing of democracy, ruthlessly exposing its vacillations, and championing the special interest of the proletariat in the bourgeois revolution.

The 'sixties. The first international proletarian party—the *First International*—takes shape, and in its work Engels, in conjunction with Marx, takes a most active part. In the First International the doctrine of Marx and Engels secures decisive victory over all its opponents.

The Paris Commune ushers in a new epoch in the history of mankind. New tasks arise; the transition to the creation in separate countries of mass proletarian parties, on the development of which Engels exercises *decisive* influence.

As far back as 1846, Engels, then only twenty-six years of age, formulated the tasks of the Communists with astonishing distinctness as follows:

“1) to achieve the interests of the proletariat in opposition to those of the bourgeoisie; 2) to do this through the abolition of private property and its replacement by community of goods: 3) to recognize no means of carrying out these objects other than a democratic revolution by force.”¹

Many years later Engels said:

“We want the destruction of classes. What are the means of securing this? The political domination of the proletariat.... But the highest act of politics is revolution. Those who recognize this must strive towards such means and political actions as will prepare the revolution, such as educate the workers for revolution, and without which the workers will always be tricked by the Favres and Pyats the day after the battle.... A party must be formed not as an appendage to some bourgeois parties, but as an independent party with its own aim, its own policy.”²

¹ *The Selected Correspondence of Marx and Engels.*

² From Engels' Speech at the London Conference of the First International.

And it was to these aims that Engels devoted his half century of struggle.

Engels' distinguishing traits as a political leader of the working class were distinctly formulated by Lenin as follows:

"A most profound understanding of the *fundamental revolutionary aims* of the proletariat, and an unusually flexible definition of *given problems* of tactics from the point of view of these revolutionary aims, and without the slightest concession to opportunism and revolutionary phraseology."¹

I now want to deal in detail with Engels as the *master of proletarian tactics*. Our Parties, the leaders of our Sections, can learn something from the brilliant examples of the art of tactics given by the great proletarian leader.

Of the rich treasury of tactical propositions which Engels worked out and applied in the course of his practical activities I will deal with only a few which directly concern *the central task of the Seventh Congress*, namely, the task of preparing and organizing the working class and all the working people for the decisive battles.

There were not a few people in Engels' time, and there are not a few today, who conceive of the proletarian revolution *not dialectically, but mechanically*. They argue that the class conscious, consistent, "pure" revolutionaries are in one camp, while the other camp is one reactionary mass; that there can be no changes in the relation of class forces, for all classes have once and for all adopted their prescribed positions in the revolutionary scheme; there are no vacillating intermediate strata, for all have been entered beforehand in the category of reaction; there is no vanguard and reserves, for all represent one revolutionary mass; there are no masses who are only just approaching revolution, for all have been, beforehand, included in the camp of the revolutionary vanguard; there are no stages in the development of the revolutionary struggle, for in some enigmatic way, the masses have been transferred to the supreme class "of the last and decisive battle", the revolutionary party need not carry on everyday work to enlighten and prepare the masses for the struggle, for the masses are only waiting for the signal to rush into battle under the leadership of the arch-revolutionary leaders; organizational preparation for the purpose of accelerating the growth of the movement is superfluous, they say, because the spontaneity of the move-

¹ V. I. Lenin, Preface to the Russian edition of *The Correspondence of Marx and Engels*.

ment itself is working in our favour. This is the type of people Engels had in mind when he ridiculed the following scheme of development of the revolution:

"All official parties united in one lump *here*, all the Socialists in one column *there*. A great decisive battle, victory all along the line at one blow. In real life things do not happen so simply. In real life... the revolution begins the other way round by the great majority of the people and also of the official parties massing themselves together *against* the government, which is thereby isolated, and overthrowing it; and it is only after those of the official parties whose existence is still possible have mutually and successfully accomplished one another's destruction that the great division takes place and with it the prospect of our rule. If... we wanted to start *straight off with the final act* of the revolution, we should be in a miserably bad way."¹

This brilliant proposition of Engels on the progress and development of the revolution was still more strikingly and fully developed by Lenin more than thirty years later. He wrote:

"To imagine that social revolution is *conceivable* without revolts by small nations in the colonies and in Europe, without the revolutionary outbursts of a section of the petty bourgeoisie *with all, its prejudices*, without the movement of non-class conscious proletarian and semi-proletarian masses against the oppression of the landlords, the church, the monarchy, national oppression, etc.—to imagine that, means *repudiating social revolution*. There are those who imagine that in one place an army will line up and say, 'we are for socialism,' and in another place another army will say, 'we are for imperialism,' and that this will be the social revolution!...

"Whoever expects a 'pure' social revolution will *never* live to see it. Such a person pays lip service to revolution without understanding what revolution is."

Further on he says:

"The socialist revolution in Europe *cannot be anything else* than an outburst of mass struggle on the part of all and sundry of the oppressed and discontented elements. Sections of the petty bourgeoisie and of the backward workers will inevitably participate in it—without such participation *mass struggle is impossible*,

¹ F. Engels, *Letter to A. Bebel*, October, 28, 1882.

without it *no* revolution is possible—and just as inevitably will they bring into the movement their prejudices, their reactionary fantasies, their weaknesses and errors. But *objectively* they will attack *capital*, and the class conscious vanguard of the revolution, the advanced proletariat, expressing this objective truth of a heterogeneous and discordant, motley and outwardly incohesive, *mass* struggle, will be able to unite and direct it, to capture power, to seize the banks, to expropriate the trusts (hated by all, though for different reasons) and introduce other dictatorial measures which in their totality will amount to the overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the victory of socialism, which, however, will by no means immediately ‘purge’ itself of petty bourgeois slag.”¹

These remarkably profound words of Engels and Lenin contain the fundamental elements of the reply to the question of how we today can successfully fight against the offensive of capital, of fascism and the menace of war. They indicate the necessity of the proletarian party having a correct policy towards the masses of its own class and towards its allies and they indicate the task of creating a broad People’s Front of struggle, the need for and the ability to take advantage of international antagonisms for the purpose of strengthening the position of the proletariat. All our experience has more than once confirmed the fact that the party which starts out with vulgarized and naive conceptions of revolution is *incapable* of playing the part of organizer and leader of the revolution. There is nothing more dangerous for a live and fighting party than a ready-made, invented and lifeless formula, for it conceals all the living and motley variety of the conditions and forms of struggle.

It is wrong to think that the revolution will develop along a straight line like the flight of an arrow, that no hitches or interruptions and retreats for the purpose of leaping further forward will occur in the maturing revolutionary process. It is wrong to think that the tactics of the revolutionary party should be based, not on the relation of class forces that exists, but on relations as we would like them to be. It is wrong to think that in the process of preparing for revolution as well as in the process of its development it is sufficient for the proletarian party to rely entirely upon the forces of the vanguard and that there is no need to rely on the majority of the working class. It is wrong to think that by ignoring other class forces and

¹ V. I. Lenin, “Discussion on Self-Determination Summed Up,” *Selected Works*, Vol. V.

by refraining from trying to win over the vacillating classes to the side of the revolution, at least temporarily, the proletarian party can create the clear situation of "class against class." It is wrong to think that it is possible to prepare for the revolution and to bring it about without taking advantage of the antagonisms within the camp of the *enemy*, without temporary, partial compromises with other classes and groups which are becoming revolutionary, and their political organizations.

In 1889, in a letter to the Danish Socialist, Trier, Engels recommends that other parties be utilized in the interests of the working class, that "other parties and measures should be temporarily supported which are either of direct advantage to the proletariat, or which represent a step forward in the direction of economic development or of political liberty..."

"But," Engels adds, "I am in favour of this only if *the advantage accruing directly for us, or for the historical development of the country along the path of economic and political revolution, is unquestionable and is worth while striving after*; and provided that the proletarian class character of the Party shall not thereby be brought into question. That for me is the absolute limit."¹

Strengthening the class character of the Party, raising the class consciousness of the proletariat, raising its fighting capacity, strengthening its positions, weakening the positions of the class enemy—such are the criteria which Engels regarded as obligatory in deciding the question of whether this or that compromise was permissible.

These tactics are profoundly hostile to the policy of class collaboration between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie pursued by international Social-Democracy, for that policy robbed the Party of its class character, it strengthened the position of the bourgeoisie and weakened and demoralized the proletariat. These revolutionary tactics have nothing in common with the policy of the "lesser evil," with voting for Hindenburg, with forming a bloc with Bruening; for in pursuing the policy of the "lesser evil," Social-Democracy surrendered to the bourgeoisie one proletarian position after the other, it paved the way for fascism, and prepared for the defeat of the proletariat.

Thirty years later, Lenin enlarged on this idea of Engels on the basis of the experience of the three Russian revolutions, and taught the young Communist Parties flexible and mobile tactics that would enable them to overcome their "Left-wing" sickness and to take up

¹ F. Engels, *Letter to Trier*, December 8, 1889. Italics mine.—D.M.

the struggle for the overthrow of the bourgeoisie in a really Bolshevik manner. He wrote:

"To carry on a war for the overthrow of the international bourgeoisie, a war which is a hundred times more difficult, prolonged and complicated than the most stubborn of ordinary wars between states, and to refuse beforehand to manœuvre, to utilize the conflict of interests (even though temporary) among one's enemies, to refuse to temporize and compromise with possible (even though transient, unstable, vacillating and conditional) allies—is not this ridiculous in the extreme? . . .

It is possible to conquer the more powerful enemy only by exerting our efforts to the utmost and by *necessarily*, thoroughly, carefully, attentively and skilfully taking advantage of every 'fissure', however small, in the ranks of our enemies, of every antagonism of interests among the bourgeoisie of various countries, among the various groups or types of bourgeoisie in the various countries; by taking advantage of every opportunity, however small, of gaining a mass ally, even though this ally be temporary, vacillating, unstable, unreliable and conditional. Those who do not understand this, do not understand even a grain of Marxism and of scientific, modern, 'civilized' socialism in *general*."¹

Comrades, if you ponder over these words of Engels and Lenin as applied to our epoch, to the policy which our Congress is now indicating for the ensuing period, you will understand that these tactics, tested by the experience of the whole of the world labour movement during many decades, now open out for the Communist International, for all its Sections, great opportunities for emerging from the agitational-propaganda period of our development and for becoming mighty factors in the whole of contemporary political life in the various countries and throughout the world. (*Applause*.) But it is precisely because we are now entering the broad road of great *mass policy*, because we are preparing to count, not in hundreds of thousands, but in millions, because we are beginning to bring under our influence those strata which only yesterday were in the ranks of Social-Democracy, or else were outside of politics altogether, because of this, the Sections of the Communist International must be particularly alert to possible *Right and opportunist distortions of our mass policy*, distortions which will retard the growth of our influence among the masses and the growth of the fight-

¹ V. I. Lenin, "*Left-Wing*" Communism, *An Infantile Disorder*.

ing capacity of the proletariat, and thereby retard the maturing of the conditions for the proletarian revolution. And here we must once again turn to our teacher Engels and recall the struggle he waged against opportunism, the ruthless, untamable struggle to which he devoted half a century of his life as a political fighter.

Engels saw right through the petty bourgeois who in scores of different disguises tried to entrench himself in the labour movement, weakening it and disorganizing it. With unerring aim and inimitable sarcasm, Marx and Engels tore the mask from the face of this philistine; they exposed the philistine grimaces beneath the mask of free and easy geniality. This philistine has the right to commit any despicable act because he considers himself to be "honestly" despicable. Engels wrote:

"Even stupidity becomes a virtue because it is the irrefutable evidence of firmness of conviction. Every hidden motive is supported by the conviction of intrinsic honesty, and the more determinedly he plots some kind of deception or petty meanness, the more simple and frank does he appear to be." This philistine is a "drainpipe in which all the contradictions of philosophy, democracy and every description of phrase-mongering is mixed up in a monstrous manner."¹

While upholding revolutionary Marxism, Engels fiercely attacked the German reformists, the French Possibilists, the British Fabians and the Ultra-Lefts. At the same time, with exceptional firmness and patience, he criticized and corrected the opportunist mistakes of the leaders of the proletarian parties such as Wilhelm Liebknecht and Bebel, Lafargue and Guesde.

This tireless struggle against opportunism, and particularly against conciliation with opportunism, caused some of the leaders whom he attacked to dub Engels "the rudest man in Europe." All of us should learn from Engels this passion in struggle, this ability to be "rude" in the interests of the Party, in the interests of the revolution.

No one was so eager to unite the vanguard of the working class in the ranks of a united workers' party as Engels was. He wanted to do that as much as we want to do it today. But he knew and saw that unity not based on principles would weaken the working class. Of what use would a mass party be to the proletariat if it served as a lasso, dragging it into collaboration with the bourgeoisie? In 1882

¹ *Marx and Engels Archive*, Book V.

he welcomed the split in the workers' party in France away from Mallone and Bruse who had abandoned the class struggle, had sacrificed the proletarian class character of the movement and had made a rupture inevitable.

"All the better," he said. "... Unity is quit a good thing so long as it is possible, but there are things which stand higher than unity."¹

I think it is necessary to recall these words of Engels precisely at the present time when here, at this Congress, we are holding aloft *the banner of the political unity of the international working class.*

Through the medium of Comrade Dimitrov's report, the congress has very strongly emphasized its will to fight for united workers' party in every country, for a united workers' world party. But such a party can be created only on the basis of *unity of principles* and not on the basis of a putrid bloc between petty bourgeois and proletarian elements after the model of the Second International. We would remind the thousands, tens and hundreds of thousands of Social-Democratic workers who regard themselves as followers and disciples of Marx and Engels that we and they would be committing a crime against our class if we re-created that fictitious "unity" which led to the catastrophe of August 4, 1914, to the bloc between a section of the working class and the bourgeoisie, and which, in the last analysis, facilitated the victory of fascism. *The working class does not need unity of this kind!* We want the unity for which our teacher Frederick Engels fought all his life; we shall exert every effort to achieve this unity, and we shall achieve it. (*Applause.*)

But this unity can be achieved only by a party which by its increasing activities wins the confidence of the masses, by a party which overcomes schematism and vulgarization in its approach to the mass movement. It is for *such* a party that Engels fought. He ruthlessly scourged *passivity and inactivity* as one of the most pernicious forms of opportunism. In his correspondence with the workers' leaders he tirelessly repeated: the Party must *act* under all circumstances. It must participate in the whole of the political life of the country and take advantage of every event in home and foreign politics for active intervention; it must be with the masses everywhere and always; at the opportune moment it must issue *real fighting slogans* that shall emanate from the masses themselves, and it must issue new ones as

¹ F. Engels, Letter to A. Bebel, October 28, 1882, Italics mine.—D.M.

the movement grows. This is the main tactical rule for the proletarian party upon which Engels insisted.

The party which exists in the close and narrow circle of its immediate supporters, which stands *outside* of the things with which the people are concerned, which cannot clutch at the things that are exciting the masses at the given moment, which is unable to generalize the grievances and aspirations of the people in distinct, intelligible slogans, such a party cannot stand at the head of mass movements.

Engels was particularly sharp in his attacks upon those who failed to be on the spot at decisive moments of the mass struggle. In this connection Engels quite openly said that the party which misses such a decisive moment, which fails to intervene, will be buried for some time.

Often, in practice, passivity and inactivity, masked by "Left" phrases, are concealed by *playing at conspiracies*, playing at exclusive underground organizations; and they degenerate into *Carbonarism*, which is alien to the spirit of the workers' party. On the other hand, parliamentary cretinism, adaptation to bourgeois *legality at all costs*, denying the significance of illegal forms of organization, and fear of violence also paralyze the fighting capacity of the working class.

Engels fought against the manifestations of *both forms* of passivity. He taught the proletarian parties to take every possible advantage of bourgeois legality for the purpose of gathering the forces of the working class, of preparing them for the struggle for the dictatorship of the proletariat and thereby transforming bourgeois legality into a weapon of the struggle against the bourgeoisie. He exposed the Bakunin-Blanquist conspiracy tactics, which the international police utilized against the workers' organizations, and urged the need for particular vigilance in regard to spies and provocateurs who penetrated the workers' organizations. At the same time he spared no blows against those Social-Democrats who, toadying to the government, declared that the workers' party was not a party of revolutionary violence.

"To attack violence," Engels wrote in indignation, "as something which is impermissible in itself, when we know that, in the final analysis, we shall achieve nothing without violence!"¹

Engels insisted that proletarian revolutionaries must be able to utilize *all forms* of struggle against the class enemy. Under the leadership of Lenin and Stalin the Bolshevik Party applied these tenets of Engels in

¹ F. Engels, *Letter to W. Bloss*, Feb. 21, 1874.

the course of twenty-five years of enormous experience in combining legal with illegal forms of work which, as is known, lay at the basis of the organizational decisions of the Second Congress of the Communist International.

Have our Sections made the utmost use of these tenets? *No, they have not.* Many comrades are convinced that under the fascist terror there is no room for "legal" footholds, for open manifestations of the labour movement, for developing a broad mass struggle. But fascism is *compelled* to create a mass basis, to create its mass organizations, to resort to social demagoguery. Hence, it is the duty of the Communists to penetrate the mass fascist organizations, to turn the fascist social demagoguery against the fascist dictatorship and thus to undermine the mass basis of fascism. It will be impossible to force our way to the masses under these conditions unless we carry on daily and systematic work in the fascist mass organizations and unless we combine legal with illegal methods of work.

At the same time it is wrong to think that we do not need illegal organizations in those countries where the labour movement is legal. Victimization by employers in all countries compels us to establish secret nuclei in the factories. The growth of the menace of fascism compels the "legal" Communist Parties to adopt measures in preparation for the possible transition to an illegal position in order to avoid repeating the mistakes committed by the Italian and German Communist Parties. We must remember that the united front movement spontaneously "legalizes" the most hunted and persecuted Communist Parties, that the mass struggle brings the most deeply underground organizations to the surface.

One of the varieties of the schematism and vulgarization against which Engels fought is the *mechanical application of fundamental, tactical propositions without taking into consideration the specific conditions prevailing in each separate country.*

We are the world party of the proletariat, the party built on the basis of genuine political and organizational unity, a party which sums up and generalizes the whole experience of the world labour movement, a party which pursues genuinely *international* tactics based on the unity of interests of the international proletariat. But these international tactics do not preclude variations created by the specific features of development of individual countries. The internationalization of the experience of the world labour movement does not mean making *stereotypes* equally applicable to the labour movement in all countries. Those who think that it is sufficient to have a few ready-made

formulas in one's pocket with which to mould the whole world labour movement to one pattern do not internationalize the labour movement, but freeze it and hinder its development.

Engels was a classic example of the genuine international leader who knew to perfection the secret of properly combining the international character of our communist movement with the ability to take into account its specific national features. He was closely connected with the *German* labour movement; he was excellently informed of all the details of the *French* labour movement; from 1844 onwards he took a most active part in the struggles of the *British* proletariat; he made a deep study of the *American* labour movement (he himself travelled across the ocean); he was exceptionally well informed about the conditions and progress of the proletarian struggle in *Italy* and in the *Pyrenees*; he was greatly interested in the revolutionary movement in Russia, the *West Slav* and the *South Slav* countries.

It is precisely this profound knowledge of the conditions in separate countries that enabled Engels properly to lead the workers' parties in these countries, to be a genuine leader and organizer of the proletarian International.

"The emancipation of the Italian peasant," he wrote to Bovio, "will not take place in the form in which the emancipation of the English factory workers will be brought about; but the more both utilize the forms corresponding to their respective conditions, the more will things correspond to the substance of the matter."¹

Such are Engels' main tactical tenets in the light of our great epoch, in the light of the tasks that confront our Congress.

Engels taught us, in defining our tactics, to approach the vital revolutionary processes in the lives of the peoples not with cut-and-dried schemes, not with ready-made scales, but on the basis of a profound study of the disposition of class forces in every single country at every given moment. He taught us to take into consideration the position of each separate class, of each of its groups, to study the sum total of all class *antagonisms* and methods by which the proletariat may take advantage of them, and unfailingly to bear in mind the international situation as a whole.

Engels taught us to be a fighting, active party, both when the tide of the movement is in flood and when it is temporarily at ebb, and to be able to find that special question which deeply concerns the

¹ F. Engels, *Letter to Bovio*, April 16, 1872.

masses and enables the party to extend and strengthen its contacts with the working class and the entire working population. He taught us to join a movement not only after it has started, but to prepare it, to organize it and, by winning the confidence of the masses, to lead it. He urged us to respond to every event which excites the masses, to develop great movements into decisive battles and thereby transform the party into a force that will gain prestige among all the working people and increase their confidence in their own strength.

Engels taught us not to become conceited at the moment of victory and not to lose heart at the moment of temporary defeat. He taught us not to be afraid to start from the beginning if we are defeated, but to start with the firm conviction that we must achieve victory at the second attempt.

Engels taught us to pursue a mass policy that corresponds to the vital interests of the broadest masses of the working people, that helps to rally the masses of the peasants and the working people in the towns around the proletariat. In the present situation this means, first of all, the establishment of a People's Front against fascism in capitalist countries, and a front of the peoples against war in the international arena. (*Applause.*)

Engels taught us to make a sober estimate of the situation, not to rush ahead before the masses have been drawn into the movement, but at the same time not to drag at the tail of these masses; not to adapt our tactics to the most backward sections of them; to be able by means of determined and rapid action to sweep these masses forward, consolidate every success of the movement and make that success the starting point for fresh successes.

Engels taught us to fight for every inch of ground won by the working class, to take advantage of every *antagonism* in the camp of the enemy, never to sacrifice the class character of the Party and the interests of strengthening the proletariat, to be in all the organizations in which the masses of the workers are to be found, and to utilize illegal and legal forms of struggle, which, in the present conditions, means strengthening the illegal organizations by extending their legal influence among the masses and extending this influence by strengthening the illegal organizations.

We are living and fighting in an incomparably more complicated situation than that which existed in Engels' time. But Engels' rich tactical legacy still retains its significance in this new situation. The Communists will utilize this legacy for a long time to come yet, and they will apply the tenets of Engels in a *Bolshevik manner*.

Does this mean that these tenets are *sufficient* for the purpose of determining our tactics? Of course not. Owing to historical conditions, Engels, like Marx, was *unable*, and *did not create* a complete science of the strategy and tactics of the revolutionary proletariat. But at the basis of this science created by the genius of *Lenin* and *Stalin* lie the remarkable ideas on strategy and tactics which the great founders of communism had developed and applied to the utmost extent they were able to. (*Applause.*)

III. WE CONTINUE THE WORK OF ENGELS

We Communists are the continuers of Engels' work.

The great and invincible strength of the revolutionary doctrine he and Marx created lies in that it *lives and develops* together with the fighting proletariat, that it is becoming *enriched* with its new experiences and *sharpened* in the struggle against its enemies.

The leaders of the Second International proved incapable of developing Marxism further. They did *not* accept the doctrine of Marx and Engels as a guide to the revolutionary action of the proletariat; they did *not* accept it as the doctrine of the necessity of preparing the masses for the violent overthrow of the rule of the bourgeoisie, for the abolition of classes in general. Some of the leaders of the Second International revised Marxism, "supplemented" it with the assertion that the development of capitalism is not accompanied by the intensification of class antagonisms, but, on the contrary, by their abatement. Others, while admitting the correctness of the fundamental propositions of Marxism in words, transformed these propositions into a dogma which justified conciliation with the realities of capitalism, justified support of reformist practices. These people called themselves Marxists; but they mutilated Marxism, vulgarized and extracted from it its revolutionary substance. In this way the theory and practice of the Second International more and more reproduced all the vulgar, petty bourgeois wisdom against which Engels fought all his life. The leaders and ideologists of the Second International *are not the continuers of the work of Engels, but of the work of his enemies.*

Engels departed from us in the middle of the 'nineties. This was exactly the time when Lenin—whose name has become a guiding star for the whole of the international proletariat—started his revolutionary work.

Marx and Engels lived, worked and fought in the pre-monopolist

epoch of capitalism, when, in the main, the development of bourgeois society was proceeding in an ascending line, in the epoch of national wars and the consummation of the bourgeois revolutions in Western Europe, in the epoch when England still possessed world commercial and industrial supremacy and when the German proletariat was still the vanguard of the world proletariat, in the epoch when the labour movement was only just taking shape as an independent political movement and when proletarian parties were only just being formed. That epoch provided Marx and Engels with all the necessary elements with which to arm the proletariat with the *mighty weapon of revolutionary theory*.

But Marx and Engels never claimed to forecast the exact route of the proletarian revolution, they never prescribed precise tactical rules for it, or claimed to have answers for problems that were insoluble in the conditions of their epoch.

Engels, who had devoted brilliant pages to the development of socialism from utopia to a science, more than once poured ridicule on those who, departing from the soil of science, tried to philosophize on the "architectonics of future society." More than once he wrote that he was quite at ease about the "people of future society who at all events will not be more stupid than we are."

Concerning Marx's critique of capitalism Engels wrote that "the results of this critique also contain the *embryo* of so-called solutions, in so far as the latter are at all possible at the present time." This, of course, also applies entirely to Engels' own works. And these brilliant ideas, outlines, embryos, which the pedants and philistines of the Second International overlooked in their blindness, were further developed and transformed into a harmonious doctrine by the great Bolsheviks *Lenin* and *Stalin*.

Lenin did not regard Marxism as a dogma, but as a guide to revolutionary action. As far back as the end of the last century, in connection with the fight around the question of the Party program, Lenin wrote:

"We do not in the least regard Marxist theory as something complete and inviolable; on the contrary, we are convinced that it only laid the cornerstone of the science which the Socialists *must* advance further in all directions if they do not want to lag behind life."¹

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Russian edition, Vol. II.

The gigantic growth of capitalist monopolies was already foretold in *Capital*. In Engels' last works (for example in the outline of his work on the Stock Exchange), attempts are already made to characterize a number of new phenomena in the economics of capitalism. But Engels died before he was able to bring out the specific features of the imperialist stage of capitalism that was already being ushered in in the 'nineties.

Monopolist, decaying capitalism; the unprecedented intensification of all capitalist contradictions; the general crisis of capitalism, the starting point of which was the World War of 1914-18 and the victory of the October Revolution, which ushered in a new epoch in the history of mankind; socialist construction and the victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R.—these are the *new* factors which Engels was not and could not have been aware of, these are the *new* factors which the Marxists had to sum up theoretically and thereby arm the revolutionary proletariat for its future struggle.

In his interview with the American workers' delegation, Stalin, in a few pages, gave a condensed characterization of the contribution which Lenin made to the treasury of Marxism. These few condensed pages ought to be read and reread, they are equivalent to many volumes. In them Stalin gives a resumé of the content of *the Leninist stage in the development of Marxism*: the analysis of imperialism as the last phase of capitalism; the further development of the core of Marxism, that is, the doctrine of the proletarian dictatorship; the development of the question of the forms and methods of socialist construction in the period of the proletarian dictatorship; the creation of a harmonious system of the hegemony of the proletariat; the development of the national-colonial question as the question of the reserves of the proletarian revolution; the creation of the doctrine on the Party.

To Lenin belongs the merit of having defined the position of the Communists in imperialist wars, a position which he recorded in the slogan—*transform the imperialist war into civil war*. And this must be all the more emphasized for the reason that attempts have been made to make it appear that the founder of this slogan was Engels. This is not true, comrades. Engels rendered too many services to the world labour movement to make it necessary to ascribe to him what he never said. Engels did not live in the epoch of imperialism; he had to lay down the positions of international socialism principally in regard to national wars. Had the Bolsheviks approached the works of Engels of the 'nineties in a dogmatic manner they would not have been able to

develop the Marxian position on the question of imperialist wars in the way Lenin did. Lenin, and Lenin alone, gave what was the new in principle and the only correct line on the question of the character of imperialist war, as well as on the question of the position the proletarian party should adopt towards it. And it is precisely because we honour the memory of our great teacher Engels that we are opposed to his being transformed into an icon, that we are opposed to hushing up, or glossing over, historical truth.

Lenin's work, which raised Marxism to a new stage, is being continued in all directions by *Stalin*. In the works, speeches and all the activities of Stalin and of the international Bolshevik Party which he leads, *the Marxist-Leninist theory*, of which Engels was one of the founders, *lives, grows and is enriched*. (Applause.)

Stalin developed Marxism in one of the fundamental questions of our epoch, in the question of *building socialism in a single country*. The Bolsheviks did not clutch at Engels' old formulas which were suitable for a different stage, left behind long ago. Under the leadership of Stalin they utterly routed the Trotskyites and Zinovievites who tried to utilize these formulas against the proletarian revolution. Lenin showed that with uneven, spasmodic, capitalist development under the conditions of imperialism, the victory of socialism was possible in a single country. Stalin *developed and upheld this theory and put it into practice*. (Applause.)

At the Fifteenth Conference of the C.P.S.U.(B.) Stalin said:

"What Engels in the forties of the last century, under the conditions of pre-monopolist capitalism, regarded as impracticable and impossible in a single country became practicable and possible in our country under the conditions of imperialism. Of course, had Engels been alive today he would not have clung to the old formulas. On the contrary, he would have greeted our revolution wholeheartedly and would have said: 'The devil take all the old formulas! Long live the victorious revolution in the U.S.S.R.!'"

Neither in the *Critique of the Gotha Program*, nor in the works of Engels, nor in Lenin's *The State and Revolution* were the *concrete problems of the first phase of communism* raised which Stalin raised and solved with the greatest boldness and profundity.

We began to build socialism in a poverty-stricken and ruined country which had inherited from the bourgeoisie a low technical level, in a country surrounded by capitalist states. Moreover, we began to build socialism *for the first time in the history of mankind*.

And *Stalin*—developing further the doctrine of *Marx, Engels* and *Lenin*, creatively putting it into living practice—was the *first* to draw up concretely a single and profoundly thought-out plan for the socialist offensive in our country; he worked out the problem of socialist industrialization as a condition of victory for socialism in the U.S.S.R.; he worked out the problem of collective farming as the road to the socialist transformation of the peasantry under proletarian leadership; he worked out the problem of the stages and methods of abolishing the capitalist elements (from the policy of restricting these elements to the policy of eliminating the kulaks as a class); he worked out the problem of the organization of labour under the conditions of socialist construction and in the struggle against petty-bourgeois equalitarianism; he worked out the problem of the conditions for and ways of abolishing the survivals of capitalism in the minds of men and of building a new, socialist culture. Stalin showed that building socialism meant, first of all, strengthening the proletarian dictatorship; and that strengthening the proletarian dictatorship, and achieving successes in socialist construction, cause proletarian democracy to come out in full bloom. And the Bolsheviks, led by *Stalin*, transformed all these theoretical propositions of Stalin into flesh and blood.

Such works and speeches of *Stalin* as his reports at Party congresses, as his speech at the Conference of Marxist Agrarians, as his famous "Six Conditions," as his new collective-farm rules, as the changes in the Soviet Constitution he has proposed, as well as his speech on the new people who have mastered technique—in short, every pronouncement *Stalin* makes is not only a landmark on the road of socialist construction in the U.S.S.R.; it is also a landmark in the enrichment and deepening of Marxist-Leninist theory. These works are the material from which the advanced workers of all countries have been and are acquiring their knowledge.

Stalin gives an example of the policy of the proletarian state which is building classless socialist society under the conditions of capitalist encirclement. *Stalin* works out the principles of the policy of the world proletarian party—the Communist International—amidst the conditions of the general crisis of capitalism and the struggle between two systems, that is, capitalism and socialism. Basing himself on the experience of the Chinese Revolution, *Stalin* worked out the problem of the concrete paths by which the national revolutionary movements grow into the Soviet revolution. *Stalin* raised the doctrine of *Marx, Engels* and *Lenin* concerning the transition period from capitalism to socialism to a new stage. (Applause.)

Lenin and Stalin did not confine themselves to certain outlines drawn up by Marx and Engels on problems of *strategy and tactics*. In his *Foundations of Leninism*, the handbook of proletarian revolutionaries all over the world, Stalin wrote that only

“in the period of direct action by the proletariat, in the period of the proletarian revolution, when the question of the overthrow of the bourgeoisie became a question of immediate application, when the question of the reserves of the proletariat (strategy), became one of the most burning questions, when all forms of struggle and of organization, parliamentary and extra-parliamentary (tactics), assumed definite shape—only in this period could a complete strategy and detailed tactics for the struggle of the proletariat be worked out.¹

The merit of Lenin and Stalin lies in that they did not confine themselves to restoring certain tactical propositions of Marx and Engels, but developed them further and created the strategy and tactics of Leninism—the complete science of the leadership of the revolutionary struggle of the proletariat.

Forty years have passed since the death of Frederick Engels. What an enormously long road the world labour movement, the whole of mankind, has traversed during these years! In place of the old tsarist despotism we have *the great country that is building socialism*. The old Chinese wall is collapsing; the four hundred million population of China has been set in motion. The flag of the Soviet revolution is flying over six provinces of China inhabited by a hundred million people. Influenced by the successes of socialism in the U.S.S.R., a powerful movement towards socialism is growing among the working people all over the capitalist world. The bourgeoisie of the capitalist countries are devastating whole countries and cities, are reopening the mediæval dungeons for the enslaved peoples, are sowing a storm of hatred and anger among all the oppressed. The First International of Marx and Engels no longer exists. And the Second International is crumbling like a piece of rotten fabric. But the men of labour are more and more closely rallying around the Third, Communist International, *the International of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin, the International of victorious socialism in the U.S.S.R., the International of the world proletarian revolution*. (Applause.)

¹ J. Stalin, *Foundations of Leninism*.

"I think," wrote Engels in 1874, "that the next International—after Marx's writings have had some years of influence—will be *directly Communist and will openly proclaim our principles.*"¹

This Communist International is represented in this hall. It embraces over three score of countries, it has millions of adherents under the influence of the Communist Parties among all nations and races in all parts of the globe. The doctrine of Marx and Engels rules unchallenged over one-sixth of the globe, backed by a powerful state, by a socialist economy with wealth amounting to billions; it is backed by a country with a hundred and seventy million population. In all countries this doctrine is breaking the chains of the slaves in order that it may embrace the whole world.

Armed with this doctrine, the Communists, in spite of terror, torture and persecution, are organizing and rallying the proletarians, the working people, the colonial slaves for the struggle, and are leading them to victory. The Communist International has become mankind's guiding star and anchor of salvation from poverty, fascism and war.

Long live the Communist International (*loud applause*), the great invincible Party of *Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin!*

(*Loud and prolonged applause, rising to an ovation. All rise amidst cheers. The delegates sing the "Internationale" and "Carmanole."*)

After an interval the Congress was greeted by delegations of parachute jumpers, participants in the Second Trade Union Sports Spartakiad of the U.S.S.R., Schutzbundler, and participants in the October fighting in Spain.

¹ *The Selected Correspondence of Marx and Engels.* Italics mine.—D.M.

TWENTY-THIRD TO THIRTY-SECOND SITTINGS

(August 7-11, 1935)

CONTINUATION OF DISCUSSION ON COMRADE DIMITROV'S REPORT

Presiding (*by turns*): Koehler, Garcia, Lacerda, Furini, Browder.

WANG MING: Comrades, the report on the fascist offensive and the tasks of the Communist International in the fight for the unity of the working class against fascism was made at our historic World Congress by the man to whose voice millions of workers, communist, socialist and unorganized workers, as well as the best and foremost intellectuals of the entire world, pay special heed to. This report was made by the man whose historic victory at the Leipzig trial is a living embodiment of the fighting power of the united front of the working class in the fight against fascism, and at the same time is an indisputable proof of the weakness and instability of the Hitler regime—by our beloved Comrade Dimitrov. (*Applause.*)

In my speech I shall dwell on that part of Comrade Dimitrov's report which has direct reference to the question of the revolutionary movement in the colonial and semi-colonial countries and the tactics of our Communist Parties.

I. THE SAVAGE OFFENSIVE OF IMPERIALISM AND THE GROWTH OF THE FORCES OF COLONIAL REVOLUTIONS

First of all, what is there new in the economic and political conditions of the colonial and semi-colonial countries, or, to be more

precise, what are the most distinctive basic features which characterize the economic and political situation in the colonial world during the period which has elapsed between the Sixth and Seventh Congresses of the Communist International?

The first feature is the savage offensive of imperialism along the entire front against the colonial and semi-colonial peoples. Everyone knows that capitalism has succeeded in somewhat easing the position of its industry not only by means of an intensified exploitation of the workers and farmers in the home countries and by war and inflation booms, but also at the *expense of the peasants in the colonies and the economically weak countries.*

How does the growing offensive of imperialism against the colonies and semi-colonies along the entire front during this period manifest itself? It is manifested mainly in the following:

First, imperialism is openly carrying on a widespread military expansion with the set aim of seizing the territory and destroying the national existence of the semi-colonial peoples. The brazen aggression and robbery on the part of the Japanese militarists in China and the war preparations of the Italian fascists against Abyssinia are glaring examples of this.

Second, the economic expansion of imperialism in the colonial and semi-colonial countries is increasing by means of a still greater reduction in the prices of the products of labour in these countries, mainly of raw materials and foodstuffs, by means of dumping and the forced reduction of customs duties in the semi-colonial countries. The imperialist powers which export to the colonial and semi-colonial countries reap the benefits from this, while the so-called national industry of the latter countries, which is eking out a miserable existence, is the loser.

Third, imperialism is intensifying its struggle against the striving of the colonial and semi-colonial peoples for national emancipation, and supports the most reactionary and corrupt groupings in the colonies and semi-colonies with the aim of rendering its economic, political and military expansion easier and more thorough.

All these facts, which testify to the growing military, economic and political expansion of the imperialists in the colonial East, in Latin America and in Africa, brought about a situation in which:

1. The national existence of a number of semi-colonial peoples is directly threatened.

2. The economic life of the agrarian colonial and semi-colonial countries is shaken to its very foundations, millions and tens of mil-

lions of peasants have perished and are perishing of hunger and because of so-called "natural calamities" (floods, drought, etc.) which in reality are the consequences of the regime of the imperialists and their native agents (this is especially evident in recent years in China and other colonial countries).

3. The national industry of the colonial and dependent countries, which was created prior to and during the last world economic crisis of capitalism, is experiencing a profound crisis (during the world economic crisis there was a temporary and partial growth of light industry, primarily of the textile industry, in a number of these countries), and the financial and monetary systems in a number of semi-colonial countries are completely bankrupt.

4. The employed workers lead a miserable existence; thousands and tens of thousands of unemployed—both workers and intellectuals—are dying of hunger; artisans and other sections of the urban petty bourgeoisie are being completely ruined and pauperized. Suicides have assumed mass proportions.

All these facts—which are direct consequences of growing imperialist expansion—have objectively led in the colonial and semi-colonial countries:

1) To an increase in the national discontent with, and indignation against, imperialism and its native agents, giving rise to the most favourable conditions for the creation of an anti-imperialist united front of the broadest masses of the population;

2) To a certain accentuation of the antagonisms between the colonial and the imperialist bourgeoisie, between the competing imperialist powers and, finally, between the various groups and sections of the colonial bourgeoisie and the landlords, creating the possibility of utilizing these contradictions for the development of a mass revolutionary movement;

3) To a weakening in the influence of national reformism among the masses, to splits among a number of national-reformist bourgeois and petty bourgeois parties and groupings; to the formation in these parties of national-revolutionary Left wings and, what is particularly important, to the growth of the role and influence of the proletariat and its Party.

All that we have said brings us to the second, most characteristic, basic feature which distinguishes the situation in the colonial and semi-colonial countries during the period which has elapsed between the Sixth and Seventh Congresses of the Communist International—the growth of the forces of colonial revolutions.

The victorious development of the Soviet revolution in China, the mass armed uprisings against imperialism in Indo-China, the tremendous sweep of the liberation movement in the countries of Latin America, the mutiny in the Chilean navy and the growing national-revolutionary movement in Brazil, the mutiny in the Dutch fleet in Indonesia (*De Zeven Provinciën*), the upsurge of the workers' and peasants' movement in India, the growth of the strike movement in Korea (the Genzan strike in particular), the mass strike of oil workers in Persia, the wave of armed uprisings in the Arabian East, the development of the revolutionary struggle among the hundred million Negroes, the preparations for armed resistance to the Italian forces in Abyssinia, which is finding a wide sympathetic response from the peoples in the colonial countries of Africa and the Near East, etc.—a mere enumeration of these revolutionary events which took place during recent years is sufficient to show clearly the awakening of the masses of toilers in the colonial and semi-colonial countries on an unprecedented scale, and to show the growth of the fighting power of colonial revolutions.

It is necessary to emphasize with all seriousness the fact that the growth of the forces of revolution in the colonial and semi-colonial countries is the result not only of the increased general offensive of imperialism and the sharpening of the class struggle in these countries, but also of the *direct and enormous influence of the great October Revolution in general and of its further historic victories during the First and Second Five-Year Plan periods in particular.*

The final and irrevocable victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R., the industrialization of the country, the collectivization of agriculture, the improvement in the material condition and the raising of the cultural level of the masses of the people, the development of the national cultures of all the peoples of the U.S.S.R., including the former colonial peoples of tsarist Russia, the strengthening of the defensive powers of the U.S.S.R., the enormous increase in the importance of the U.S.S.R. in world politics, the transformation of all its working people into members of socialist society enjoying equal rights, and the broadening of Soviet democracy—all this serves the peoples of the colonial and economically weak countries as concrete historical examples of how to transform their countries from economically backward, agrarian countries into leading industrial countries; how to transform their countries—the objects of constant attacks by imperialist vultures—into countries which can defend themselves, which can repel

any attack by external enemies; how from oppressed and uncultured peoples to become free and cultured.

It follows from all this that:

1. The appraisal of the economic and political situations in the colonial and semi-colonial countries and of the prospects for their further development which was given by the Sixth Congress of the Communist International has been fully and completely corroborated. On the other hand, the theory of the Social-Democrats and the renegades (Roy and others) about "decolonization" has been just as completely shattered as their theory of "organized capitalism."

2. The appraisal of the world situation which was given by Comrade Stalin at the Seventeenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.) and by the Seventh Congress of the Communist International—"the revolutionary crisis is maturing and will continue to mature," "the capitalist world is entering a period of sharp clashes as a result of the accentuation of the internal and external contradictions of capitalism"—fully and completely corresponds to the contemporary international situation, and to the situation in the colonial countries in particular. It is evident from this that the position of Social-Democracy and of the renegades that appraise the present situation as the "beginning of a new era of fascism" and see for the future only the "prospect of black reaction" is entirely without foundation. "...The enormous world of colonies and semi-colonies has been transformed into an unquenchable flame of the revolutionary mass movement," "for world imperialism the colonial countries are, at the present time, the most dangerous sector of its battle front"—this characterization given by the Sixth Congress of the Communist International beyond question sounds even more convincing and well-founded today.

II. THE ESTABLISHMENT, EXTENSION AND CONSOLIDATION OF THE ANTI-IMPERIALIST UNITED FRONT—THE MAJOR TASK OF THE COMMUNISTS IN THE COLONIAL AND SEMI-COLONIAL COUNTRIES

Comrades, it is precisely in connection with the growing imperialist expansion along the entire front in the colonial and dependent countries, precisely in connection with the growth of the national liberation movement of the oppressed peoples against imperialism that the question of the anti-imperialist united front in all the colonial and semi-colonial countries assumes, as has been very correctly pointed out by Comrade Dimitrov, exceptional importance. In order to bear this out, let us point to some of the most important

colonial countries. Despite the fact that the national-liberation movement in these countries progresses unevenly, that the relationship between the class forces in the various countries is unequal, that the power and importance of the proletariat and its Communist Parties in the political life of these countries vary and that *the anti-imperialist united front tactics are therefore applied differently in each of these countries—these tactics nevertheless assume primary importance for each of these countries.*

China

Some people think that since the Soviet revolution has already triumphed on a considerable portion of the territory of China and since the class struggle has become unusually acute, the question of an anti-imperialist People's Front is no longer of any importance, or is of no particular importance. This is a grave error. The facts testify to just the contrary. The facts have clearly indicated and are indicating that in present-day China the question of the anti-imperialist People's Front is not only of primary importance but is, I might say, of decisive importance.

This is explained by the fact that China is passing through an *unprecedented national crisis*. In the time which has elapsed since the Manchurian events (1931), that is, in less than four years, almost half of the territory of China is either occupied by Japanese imperialism or is actually under the iron heel of Japanese militarists.

After Manchuria—Jehol, after Jehol—the zone around the Great Wall and Shanhaikwan, after Shanhaikwan and the strategic points along the Great Wall—the so-called “Luantung demilitarized districts,” after the “Luantung demilitarized districts”—the actual, occupation by the Japanese military forces of the Hopei, Chahar and Suiyuan provinces. The plan for the complete abolition of China as a state, which was outlined in the Tanaka memorandum, is being systematically carried out.

If this state of affairs will continue in the future, then clearly our other provinces along the Yangtze River, in the valley of the Chungkiang River, etc., will gradually be seized by the Japanese imperialist vultures. Our country, which possesses a culture that is five thousand years old, the oldest in the history of mankind, will in this way be wholly transformed into a colony; and our nation, which has a population of 450,000,000, the largest nation in the world, will be completely enslaved.

Comrades, can the great Chinese nation further endure this state of affairs? No, it cannot. Can the 450,000,000 people of China do other than fight for its national existence, for its independence as a state, for its territorial integrity, and for its human rights and liberties? *No, it cannot but fight. The Chinese people have fought, are fighting and will continue to fight for all this. (Applause.)*

The question is put squarely: *either to resist the offensive of imperialism—and live; or to renounce resistance against the external enemy—and die. Under the conditions of the growing national crisis there is no other means of saving China than the general mobilization of our entire great nation for a decisive and relentless struggle against imperialism. At the same time, the Communist Party has no other means for the general mobilization of the entire Chinese nation for the sacred national-revolutionary struggle against imperialism than the tactics of the anti-imperialist united People's Front.*

In recent years the Communist Party of China has applied and is applying the tactics of the anti-imperialist united front. The Communist Party of China applied these tactics in the struggle of the Red Army, which repeatedly addressed itself to all the military units of Kuomintang China with offers of concluding a fighting alliance for a joint struggle against imperialism, stipulating only the following elementary, strictly business-like conditions: the cessation of the offensive against the Soviet districts and the extension of democratic rights to the people (freedom of the press and of speech, the right to organize, to hold demonstrations, to strike, etc.). The Communist Party of China applied these tactics during the heroic defence of Shanghai in the beginning of 1932; the Communists fought in the front ranks, shoulder to shoulder with the soldiers of the Nineteenth Route Army and the population of Shanghai; the Communists organized a general strike of the workers in all Japanese textile mills in Shanghai in support of the Nineteenth Route Army; the Shanghai Party organizations organized armed detachments of workers and students to participate in the fighting at the front and organized transport detachments, communication detachments, reconnaissance detachments, supply detachments, Red Cross detachments, etc., in order to assist the army and to render the rear secure; the Central Soviet government of China, despite its straitened financial position, sent tens of thousands of dollars to assist the heroic anti-Japanese strike of the workers.

It must, nevertheless, be stated with all seriousness that the Communist Party of China has not as yet succeeded *in carrying out these*

tactics really consistently and without mistakes. For example: during the heroic defence of Shanghai the Communist Party of China should have created the broadest united anti-imperialist front with all those who supported the armed struggle of the Nineteenth Route Army against the Japanese army of occupation. But, because of the erroneous stand of individual leaders of our Party, who considered that the slogan "a union of workers, peasants, soldiers, merchants and intellectuals" was inadmissible, a really broad anti-Japanese People's Front was not formed. The Communist Party of China should have organized a general strike in Shanghai and should have striven to attain the arming of the workers on the basis of a broad united front of all Red and reformist trade unions against Japanese imperialism. But, because of the Right opportunist sabotage and the "Left" sectarian errors of our trade union functionaries, the slogan of the general strike was not realized and the arming of the workers, with the aim of sending them to the front, was carried out at a relatively slow pace.

Another example: The Soviet government and the Revolutionary War Council addressed an appeal to all the people and to all military units to conclude a fighting agreement for a joint armed struggle against Japanese imperialism. (All foreign and Chinese newspapers were obliged to publish this appeal.) General Cheng Cheng, the commander-in-chief of the Kuomintang troops operating against the Red Army on the Northern Front in Kiangsi, together with his commanders, demanded from Chiang Kai-shek that the war against the Red Army be stopped and that a fighting agreement be concluded with the latter against the Japanese army of occupation. In reply, Chiang Kai-shek, on the one hand openly proclaimed that "anyone who persists in speaking of a struggle against Japan will be severely punished," and he removed General Cheng Cheng from his post. On the other hand, he was forced to publish his proclamation to the Red Army in which, in an attempt to justify his rejection of a joint struggle against Japan, he heaped the most barefaced accusations on the Red Army (absence of elementary human decencies, etc.). Under these conditions the Communist Party of China should have addressed itself to General Cheng Cheng and his troops and to all other military units who desired to struggle against Japanese imperialism with even more concrete proposals. But, because of the inconsistency with which the Communist Party of China was carrying out its policy it merely limited itself to a negative reply to Chiang Kai-shek, assuming that it had thus exposed him.

Such errors were, first of all, a consequence of the fact that many of our comrades did not understand and do not understand the new situation which has arisen in China in recent years. They do not understand how to advance the subject of the anti-imperialist united front in China in a *new manner*.

I believe that now—considering our previous positive and negative experiences, considering the present position of our country in which the national existence of our people is threatened—our Party, in this situation, must further develop its anti-imperialist united People's Front tactics, consistently trying to achieve the most daring, extensive and most powerful range of this movement in order that the Chinese people should thus be able, in the shortest possible time, really to unite for the common struggle against imperialism and for the salvation of our fatherland.

How should these tactics of the Communist Party of China develop further? In my opinion and in the opinion of the entire Central Committee of the Communist Party of China our tactics should consist in a *joint appeal with the Soviet government of China to all the people, to all parties, groups, troops, mass organizations and to all prominent political and social leaders to organize together with us an All-China United People's Government of National Defence.* (Applause.)

At the same time, the Communist Party of China should openly and solemnly proclaim before all the people that it welcomes the participation of this united people's government of national defence together with representatives of the Soviet government, of all those who refuse to be colonial slaves, of all soldiers and commanders who are ready to turn their arms in defence of their people and fatherland, of all parties, groups and organizations that want to participate in the sacred struggle for national liberation, of all honest young people from among the membership of the Kuomintang and the Blue Shirt League who really love their people and their country, of all Chinese emigrants who want to save their fatherland and of all their brothers among the national minorities, who are under the yoke of the imperialists and their agents—the Chinese militarists.

Some people think that such a proposal by the Communist Party of China bears, first of all, merely an agitation and propaganda character and cannot lead to tangible results. This is absolutely incorrect, comrades!

Our Party's proposal is based on absolutely real objective and subjective factors. The objective situation of China eloquently speaks

of the possibility of realizing a proposal of this kind by our Party. To prove this I should like to mention the following instances which deal with facts and people.

1. In January, February and March, 1932, the Nineteenth Route Army, consisting of Kuomintang units, heroically defended Shanghai against the Japanese imperialists. Prior to this, for a period of two to three years this army, by order of Chiang Kai-shek, waged war against our Red Army and was defeated several times. But after the Manchurian events of September 18, 1931, and especially in connection with the Japanese offensive against Shanghai and the unprecedented growth of anti-Japanese popular outbreaks, this Nineteenth Route Army, with its commanders—Tsai Ting-kai, Chiang Kuang-nei, Weng Chao-yuan and others—at its head, despite the orders of the Nanking government, turned its arms against Japanese imperialism, thus writing one of the most glorious pages in the history of the Chinese people's struggle for emancipation.

2. During the Fukien events, at the end of 1933 and the beginning of 1934, the Nineteenth Route Army, with the very same commanders at its head, concluded a fighting agreement with the Red Army for a joint struggle against Japanese imperialism. Even such well-known militarists as Cheng Ming-chu took part in these Fukien events.

3. Anti-Japanese and anti-Chiang Kai-shek armed rebellions of Kuomintang army corps, led by Generals Chi Hung-chang, Fang Cheng-wu, Sun Tien-yin and others, in North China in 1934. The best proof of the radicalization of these army corps and of a part of their commanding staff is the behaviour of General Chi Hung-chang. While commanding the Thirtieth Kuomintang Army Corps he and his corps, by order of Chiang Kai-shek, fought for two years against the Fourth Red Army on the Honan-Hupeh-Anhwei front. Impressed by the heroism of the Red Army and of the Red partisans in their struggle for liberation, and incensed by the Nanking government's continual betrayal of the interests of the Chinese people and the complete capitulation to Japan, General Chi Hung-chang began to realize the necessity of going over to the side of the people. Upon learning of this change in the frame of mind of General Chi Hung-chang, Chiang Kai-shek immediately recalled him under the pretext of sending him to Europe to study military science. When he returned to China, Chi Hung-chang began to make repeated requests to the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China to accept him into the ranks of the Party. The Central Committee accepted him into the Party.

From then on he worked as a Communist, carrying out all instructions and following the directives of the Party. He utilized his money and property in the cause of the revolution and the people. When his active work in collecting military and popular forces for the salvation of the fatherland stirred up all North China, Chiang Kai-shek, with the assistance of Japanese imperialism, organized an attempt on the life of Chi Hung-chang. Severely wounded and lying in a hospital in the French concession in Tientsin, he was arrested and subsequently executed in Peiping by order of Chiang Kai-shek. The entire Chinese and foreign press reported that both Comrade Chi Hung-chang and his adherent, General Jen Yin-chi, despite their injuries and their grave physical condition, conducted themselves before the Kuomintang court and at the time of their execution as staunch national heroes devoted to their fatherland. They died like true revolutionary fighters for the cause of the people. Both died shouting: "Long live the Communist Party of China! Down with Japanese imperialism and its Kuomintang agents!" (*Applause.*)

Yes, the Communist Party of China, by the very character of its organization, strategy and tactics, its program and its aims, is, first and foremost, the party of the working class. At the same time, the Communist Party of China is the party of the entire Chinese people in the struggle for their national and social emancipation. (*Applause.*) The Communist Party of China is far from being ashamed of the fact that within its ranks there are individual prominent generals of the type of Comrade Chi Hung-chang. Quite the contrary, it is proud of this fact. It takes pride in this because it clearly shows that the Communist Party is the only party of national hope and national glory for all the Chinese people. And it is only our Party that can unite all the best, all the honest and all the revolutionary sons and daughters of the Chinese people, who no longer want to tolerate the transformation of their country into an imperialist colony, the enslavement of their people and the death by starvation of millions of toilers.

The Communist Party of China takes pride in this because the authority and influence of our Party is so great that even generals and high commanders of the Kuomintang troops, when they realize their duty to their country and their people, see their only way out and their only hope in the Communist Party of China. Finally, our Party takes pride in this because the force and influence of Marxism-Leninism, the educational power of the Communist Party and the weight it carries are so great that even a former general and a new-

comer in the ranks of the Party like Comrade Chi Hung-chang could by his revolutionary behaviour and his heroic death show an example of the conduct of a real Communist, worthy of the trust of his Party and his people! (*Applause.*)

4. In 1933 a basic platform was published for the organization of a national war of the Chinese people against Japanese imperialism, signed by thousands of people and headed by Soong Ching-ling (the widow of Sun Yat-sen).

The signatures of the initiators of and the adherents to this platform, both in China and abroad, clearly indicated the general national character of the document and the earnest desire of the Chinese people to take up arms against the Japanese oppressors.

Can there be any doubt, in connection with the further accentuation of the national and social crisis and the further disgraceful capitulation of the Nanking government to Japanese imperialism, that all that is best and most honest in Chinese society will with even greater determination stand up for the salvation of its people and its country from enslavement by Japanese imperialism and its agents? Among the soldiers and the commanding staff of the Kuomintang troops as well as among present and former cadets of the Whampoo Military Academy and others there were, are and will be not a few admirable young men who evince an ever greater desire and readiness to cooperate with the people and its Soviet government and Red Army in the struggle against imperialism.

The feasibility of the proposals of the Communist Party of China is due not only to the objective situation of the country but also to the growth of the subjective factors—the growth in the power of the Red Army and of the Soviets.

During the year and a half which has elapsed since the Thirteenth Plenum of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, the Chinese Red Army has won a great new victory. Under the leadership of the Central Committee of the Communist Party and the Central Soviet government of China the main forces of the Red Army in the former Central Soviet district of Kiangsi-Fukien not only successfully slipped through the strategic encirclement by Chiang Kai-shek's army, which was almost a million strong, but also broke through the enemy's ring on the southern and western fronts and accomplished the heroic march from Kiangsi to Northwestern China. By passing through nine provinces, overcoming the difficulties presented by high mountain ranges, lack of roads and mighty rivers (Wukiang, Yangtze, Chinsakiang, Tatu Ho, etc.), by fighting through a distance

of over three thousand kilometres (voices: "*Long live the glorious, heroic Chinese Red Army!*", *loud applause*), the main forces of the Chinese Red Army displayed heroism and accomplished military feats unexampled in the history of civil war. The Red Army carried out in time the general plan of crossing into Szechwan, joined forces with another important unit of the Red Army (the Fourth Army) in the vicinity of the city of Chengtu and, together with the Fourth Army, created a new Central Soviet district on part of the territory of the provinces of Kweichow, Szechwan, Sikang, Yunan, Kansu and Shensi of such size and strength as was previously unknown.

The numerical strength of the Red Army in all Soviet districts not only did not decrease during the recent period of heavy fighting but has greatly increased. According to data of the hostile foreign and Chinese press the numerical strength of the regular troops of the Red Army is today already approaching the half-million mark.

Not only the growth of the forces of the Red Army and the Soviets but also the growth of the forces of the Communist Party testify to the strengthening of the subjective factor.

The Communist Party of China has become a party which numbers almost half a million members and which has won over to its side not only a majority of the workers in the Soviet districts but a majority of the population there. Under difficult conditions, the Communist Party brilliantly leads the struggle of the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army and the Soviet power. Despite difficulties and at the price of the greatest sacrifices the Communist Party of China is heroically acquitting itself in Manchuria, Jehol, North China and the Kuomintang districts as the only leader and organizer of mass revolutionary struggle, beginning with primitive and passive forms (petitions, sabotage, etc.) and carrying it forward to its most acute forms. On the basis of the Leninist-Stalinist line of the Communist International, the Communist Party, in the hard school of national and class struggle, has been able to forge and to temper hundreds and thousands of fighters devoted to the cause of revolution, has been able to create talented cadres who are capable of fighting and who are not afraid of difficulties but go out to meet them in order to overcome them. Among these fighters are foremost Party leaders and statesmen—Comrades Mao Tse-tung (*loud and prolonged applause*) Chang Kuo-tao, Hsiang Yin, Chow En-lei, Po Ku, Chang Wen-tien, Lin Tsu-han, Wang Chia-hsian and others. Among them are famed military commanders—Comrades Chu The (*loud and prolonged applause*) Peng Te-huei, Hsu Hisan-chien, Ho Lung, Tung Chien-tang, Chang Tsan-hao, Hsiao Keh, Lin

Piao, Lo Ping-kwei, Lu Pei-hsuen and others. Among them were and are national heroes and class fighters—Comrades Peng Pai, Yang Yin, Chu Tsin-po, Lo Tang-hsien, Tsai Ho-sen (all members of the Political Bureau of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China), Teng Chung-hsia (member of the Central Committee), Yung Tai-yin (member of the Central Committee of the Communist Party and leader of the Young Communist League of China), Chen Yuan-tao, Ho Tsin-shu (prominent leaders in the fight against Li Li-hsian-ism), Mo Pin-lan (prominent woman Communist) and others, national heroes and fighters whose Bolshevik firmness under tortures and atrocities in enemy prisons and heroic death showed fighting examples for every Communist and evoked the most profound admiration throughout China. Among them were fearless and heroic fighters—Comrades Huang Kung-lo (member of the Central Committee of the Party, Commander of the Fifth Red Army), Shen Tsei-min (member of the Central Committee of the Party), Liu I (Political Commissar of the Second Red Army), Sun Hei-chow (Commissar of the Seventh Corps of the Red Army)—who fought to the last drop of blood for the cause of the Soviets and Red Army. Among these cadres were famous national heroes—Comrades Sun Hsiao-pao, Hu Wen-yui and others—who were in command of workers' volunteer detachments and who gave their lives in the most decisive battles during the heroic defence of Shanghai; Tung Tsan-shun, Pei Yan and others who heroically sacrificed their lives in the struggle against the Japanese army of occupation in Manchuria. Among them are also such noteworthy commanders and political workers of the famous vanguard of the Chinese Workers' and Peasants' Red Army as Comrade Fan Chi-min, who, taken prisoner by the Kuomintang executioners, holds high the glorious banner of the Red Army and the Communist Party and evokes the sympathy and admiration of all the best people of China (*Loud applause. All rise.*)

The ideological, political and organizational growth of the Communist Party of China is explained by the fact that it is being led by the Leninist Communist International, by the fact that it can utilize the experience of all Sections of the Communist International and, primarily, the valuable experience of the leading Section of the Communist International—the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks). (*Applause.*)

Our Party is true to the teachings of the man who, after the death of Lenin, continued to develop further the theory and tactics of Marxism-Leninism in general, and the theory and tactics of Marxism-

Leninism as applied to colonial revolutions in particular; who developed the theoretical foundations of the strategy and tactics of the Chinese Revolution—to the teachings of the great Stalin! (*Loud and prolonged applause. All rise. Shouts of "Hurrah!" and "Wansui!"*)

The Communist Party of China has grown and become strong on the basis of an irreconcilable struggle against counter-revolutionary Trotskyism and liquidationist Chen Tu-hsiuism, against the semi-Trotskyist Li Li-hsianist line and counter-revolutionary Lo Chang-lunism. It has grown and become strong on the basis of an active participation in the leadership of various forms of mass struggle in the anti-imperialist and agrarian revolution. It is precisely this growth of the forces of the Communist Party of China that permits it boldly and decisively to raise in a new manner the question of the anti-imperialist united front.

Some people think that the proposal of the Communist Party of China for an anti-imperialist united front is merely a manœuvre and not a real policy. This is absolutely false, comrades.

These people cannot comprehend the simple truth that the *Communist Party has no interests other than the interests of the people.* (*Applause.*) Does not the cause of the salvation of the fatherland from imperialist invasion correspond to the interests of the people? Of course it does! China is our fatherland! The Chinese nation is the Communists, the Red Army, all the sons and daughters of our fatherland! (*Applause.*) The cause of the salvation of our fatherland is the cause of the salvation of our entire people from colonial slavery and death by starvation. These people do not understand that the strength of the Communist Party lies precisely in the fact that, unlike the Kuomintang, the Social-Democratic bourgeois and petty bourgeois parties, its words are always at one with its deeds.

Brazil

A really serious national movement has only just begun in Brazil, but it has already led to a political crisis. On the initiative of the proletariat and the national-revolutionary forces, the National Liberation Alliance (*Alianza Nacional Libertadora*)—an organization representing a revolutionary anti-imperialist bloc of classes—was formed in Brazil in the beginning of this year. The National Liberation Alliance is supported by the Communist Party, and Communists have entered its organizations together with members of many other political parties and groups.

In contrast to the Chinese Kuomintang of 1925-27 when it was still a bloc of anti-imperialist organizations the Brazilian National Liberation Alliance is, from the very beginning, a broad democratic organization based on individual and collective membership. Among its members are workers' trade unions, student and youth organizations, peasant leagues, etc. Many officers and enlisted army and navy men have affiliated themselves with the National Liberation Alliance. This popular and democratic character of the National Liberation Alliance considerably facilitates the struggle of the proletariat and its Communist Party for leadership within and without the Alliance. At numerous mass meetings and popular conferences our Comrade Louis Carlos Prestes—the national hero and “knight of hope” of the Brazilian people—was elected honorary chairman of the National Liberation Alliance. (*Applause.*)

Comrade Prestes' appeal of July 5, 1935, shows that our Brazilian comrades are the foremost fighters for the national emancipation of the entire Brazilian people. Both in the appeals of the National Liberation Alliance and in Prestes' manifestos three major demands of the program for the creation of a broad anti-imperialist united front are advanced:

1. The struggle for the national independence of Brazil;
2. The struggle against the latifundia system and for the immediate confiscation and transfer to the peasants of the latifundia belonging to the imperialists and the national traitors to and betrayers of the nation;
3. The struggle for popular democracy, in defence of democratic rights and popular liberties against the encroachments and violations on the part of the reactionary Vargas government and the fascists.

In connection with the tremendous growth of the influence and forces of the National Liberation Alliance, the Vargas government, paying lip service in defence of “liberal democracy and peace against Left and Right extremism” is, with the support and on the instructions of the imperialists, primarily of the British imperialists, destroying popular liberties, promulgating extraordinary decrees, concluding agreements with the reactionary government of Argentina concerning armed intervention in the event of an outbreak of a national-liberation revolution in Brazil, consolidating the forces of the clergy and landlords, instigating the Integralists to commit atrocities and arming counter-revolutionary bands. Comrade Prestes, in the name of the entire Brazilian people, has unfurled the banner of struggle under the slogan: “All power to the National Liberation Alliance!”

The Brazilian Communist Party is faced with the task of further consolidating the united national front; of wholly overcoming all misgivings concerning the correct line of the Party and the sectarian resistance to it on the part of individual Communists; of fearlessly developing a mass movement in the name and defence of the National Liberation Alliance, raising this movement to the highest forms of struggle for power.

At the same time, the Communists cannot but remember that without the active support of the peasant masses the struggle against imperialism and reaction cannot be successful, and that an underestimation of the peasants' struggle may lead, as has been shown by the experience of the Communist Party of China (1927), to severe defeats. The Communists are therefore making a great effort to enlist the Brazilian peasantry, the basic mass of the Brazilian people, into an active struggle for national emancipation, for the urgent demands of the peasants directed against the landowners and against the latifundia system, to organize peasant leagues and to affiliate them with the National Liberation Alliance, and to strengthen the influence of the proletariat in the struggle of the peasantry.

At the same time, our Brazilian comrades will extend the anti-imperialist people's united front by including in it all possible, even though temporary, allies and fellow travelers (among them parliamentary opposition parties and governors of the various states of Brazil who are dissatisfied with the Vargas government), in order to weaken and isolate the Vargas government and to facilitate the national liberation struggle of the Alliance.

The National Liberation Alliance has launched a great and glorious cause. Were it actually to win power, it could put through a broad program of national and social reforms in the interests of the Brazilian people. Having arisen on the basis of a united anti-imperialist People's Front, the government of the National Liberation Alliance will be an *anti-imperialist government primarily*, but as yet it will not be a revolutionary-democratic dictatorship of the proletariat and the peasantry. Together with representatives of the proletariat this government will include representatives of other classes which have participated in the struggle for the national liberation of the Brazilian people (among them also representatives of that part of the national bourgeoisie which temporarily supports the struggle of the people).

The Communists in this government will strive for a program of national and social reforms in the interests of the people.

The Communists will strive to make the national-revolutionary government a centre which consistently fights for peace against imperialist war, a centre which inspires and rallies the masses of the people throughout Latin America for the just struggle of liberation from the imperialist yoke.

At the same time the Communists will strive to have extensive social measures carried out in the interests of the workers, peasants and urban petty bourgeoisie: they will fight for real democracy for the people and for the arming of the people, for bread for the hungry, for the transfer to the urban poor of food supplies that were hoarded for purposes of speculation; they will demand the introduction of an eight-hour working day, an advanced form of social insurance and the establishment of a minimum wage for the workers.

The Communists will suggest to the government of the National Liberation Alliance that it promulgate measures to ameliorate considerably the lot of the urban toiling masses that is, that it abrogate all old taxes, reduce rent for living quarters and premises occupied by small traders and artisans, ensure low credits, introduce free education in schools and universities for the children of the working people.

The Communists will strive to make the national government begin a struggle to ameliorate the condition of the peasantry, revoke all feudal duties and taxes, annul indebtedness to the bankers, usurers and landlords, confiscate and distribute among the peasants the land of the latifundia owned by foreigners and the enemies of the people and of the fatherland, recognize all unauthorized seizures of landlords' food supplies by the hungry peasants, ensure the right of the peasants to organize into peasant leagues and assist in the organization of peasant self-defence against the violence of the reactionaries.

Our Brazilian comrades have made a good beginning towards establishing a united anti-imperialist front. Let us hope that they will be able to make a success of this great and difficult undertaking. (*Applause.*)

Other Communist Parties of Latin America are beginning to enter upon the same path. They can learn something from our Brazilian comrades adapting, of course, the experience of the latter to the peculiarities of their own countries.

In a number of countries of Latin America, however, until very recently, the line of establishing a broad anti-imperialist front has not always been well understood, and sometimes has even met with serious resistance

It is true that in *Mexico* the Communist Party has achieved certain

successes in the struggle for trade union unity and in the peasants' struggle. This is very important and our Mexican comrades should be congratulated on these successes. But the Mexican Communist Party has as yet done almost nothing in the struggle for the united anti-imperialist front.

Even less, perhaps, has thus far been accomplished in *Argentina*, despite the fact that the Argentine Communist Party has not a few good, theoretically grounded comrades, and has had much experience in the class struggle in the past. The situation in Argentina has become very acute in recent months. The popular and, in particular, the anti-imperialist movement is growing. Under these conditions the achievements of the Communist Party are insufficient and the Communist Party must overcome the sectarian attitude which is still strong in its ranks. The Argentine Communists will strive to achieve a turn in the struggle for the establishment of a broad united front against Uriburism and imperialism, striving to achieve an agreement for joint action not only with the Socialist but also with the Radical Party, despite the resistance of the Right elements within this Party. It is a mistake to consider (and this point of view may spread through the ranks of the Communist Party of Argentina) that before proceeding to the struggle for the People's Front it is absolutely necessary to establish a united proletarian front beforehand. Experience has shown (in Brazil, for example, that the establishment of an anti-imperialist united front in semi-colonial countries considerably facilitates the achievement of trade union unity. At the same time, however, a united proletarian front in its turn strengthens and consolidates the People's Front of struggle against reaction and imperialism. These two tasks should therefore not be placed in opposition to each other, nor should stages or degrees be set up for the solution of these tasks; it is necessary to struggle boldly for a united proletarian and People's Front against imperialism and reaction!

India

India is a classical colonial country with a relatively numerous proletariat, a country in which the demarcation of classes has reached an advanced stage. Whereas in speaking of China and Brazil I pointed out that the Communist Parties of these countries were able to achieve appreciable successes in elaborating platforms of demands and were able to find suitable forms of mass organization for the creation of a broad people's anti-imperialist front, I must say that the situation is different in India.

Our comrades in India suffered for a long time from "Left" sectarian errors: they did not participate in all the mass demonstrations organized by the National Congress or organizations affiliated with it. At the same time, the Indian Communists did not possess sufficient forces independently to organize a really powerful and mass anti-imperialist movement. Therefore, the Indian Communists until very recently were to a considerable extent isolated from the mass of the people, from the mass anti-imperialist struggle. It was only recently that the all-Indian Communist Party, which has already taken shape, began to rid itself of its sectarian errors and made the first steps toward the creation of an anti-imperialist united front. Nevertheless, our young Indian comrades, having taken this road, showed a great lack of understanding of the united front tactics. This may be borne out even by the fact that our Indian comrades in attempting to establish a united anti-imperialist front with the National Congress in December of last year put before the latter such demands as "the establishment of an India Workers' and Peasants' Soviet Republic," "confiscation of all lands belonging to the *zamindars* [landowners] without compensation," "a general strike as the only effective program of action," etc. Such demands on the part of our Indian comrades can serve as an example of how not to carry on the tactics of the anti-imperialist united front. True, the Indian Communists somewhat corrected their line later on and achieved, on the one hand, the amalgamation of the revolutionary and reformist trade unions, and, on the other hand, an agreement with the so-called Congressional Socialists for a struggle against the new slavish constitution. This policy has already brought the first results.

The Indian Communists must formulate a program of popular demands which could serve as a platform for a broad people's anti-imperialist united front in each given period of the struggle of the masses. In my opinion this program for struggle in the immediate future should include approximately the following demands:

1. Against the slavish constitution;
2. For the immediate liberation of all political prisoners;
3. For the abolition of all extraordinary laws and decrees directed against the interests of the broad masses of the people;
4. Against the reduction of wages, the lengthening of the working day, and the discharge of workers;
5. Against burdensome taxes, high land rents, and against confiscation of the peasant's land for non-payment of debts and mortgage bonds;

6. For the establishment of democratic liberties.

To strive with all their power and all the means at their disposal for the establishment of a united anti-imperialist front of the broad masses of the people both within and without the National Congress, to strive for the active participation of Communists and their supporters in all mass anti-imperialist demonstrations, irrespective of who calls them, in order to show the people by deeds that the Communists are really the vanguard of the people of India in the struggle for national emancipation—this is now the main task of the Indian comrades.

Arabian Countries

The task of the Communists in the colonial and semi-colonial countries is to extend and assume leadership of the anti-imperialist struggle. I will just touch on an additional task which faces the Communists of the Arabian countries.

The international imperialists, in the interests of their predatory policy, have dismembered the Arabian countries, setting up artificial borderlines. But, despite the fact that individual Arabian countries are ruled by different imperialist powers, they are all interconnected by their geographic location and by their common language, history and revolutionary traditions.

Hence it follows that the Arabian Communists, while working to establish a people's anti-imperialist front in each of these countries, must at the same time join forces and strive to achieve the coordination of the anti-imperialist struggle in all these countries, must strive to establish an all-Arabian people's anti-imperialist front.

I believe that by taking into account the experience of China, Brazil and other countries, our comrades in the remaining colonial and semi-colonial countries will be able to draw their own tactical conclusions, depending on the concrete conditions of their struggle.

United Front and Trade Union Unity

This brings me to the question of the united front of the working class and trade union unity in the colonial and semi-colonial countries.

Some people think that questions of the united front of the working class and of trade union unity are not on the order of the day, or, at any rate, are of no particular significance to the colonial and semi-colonial countries, because as a rule the working class of these coun-

tries has not been split into a revolutionary (Communist) and a reformist (Social-Democratic) camp. This is not true, comrades!

It is true that the workers in colonial and semi-colonial countries, because of the peculiar historical conditions of these countries, were not, as a rule, split into Communist and Social-Democratic camps as was and is the case in capitalist countries. But the working class and its trade union movement in the colonial and dependent countries is to a considerable extent split into the *revolutionary* and the *national-reformist camps*, in the first place, and, secondly, they are split according to various guild traditions and mediæval customs (associations of people coming from the same district, religious organizations, etc.). As a result of the growing national and class struggle in the colonial and dependent countries, and because of the influence of the extensive and mighty struggle for a united anti-fascist front and trade union unity on the part of the working class in capitalist countries (especially in France, Germany, Spain and Austria), the workers in the colonial and semi-colonial countries have evinced and are evincing greater activity and a keen desire to establish a united front of their class, and trade union unity. This is borne out by numerous facts.

As a result of the growing will on the part of the mass of workers to establish a united front and a united trade union movement, a change has taken place in the attitude of the reformist, anarcho-syndicalist and other trade union leaders. In *Chile*, for instance, the anarcho-syndicalist General Confederation of Labour, which took a decisive stand against a united front with the adherents of the revolutionary trade union movement, was lately forced to declare its readiness to conclude a united front agreement.

In *Brazil*, because of mass pressure, many government trade unions, and even a number of trade union confederations affiliated with the Ministry of Labour have severed their connections with the latter and have affiliated with the Trade Union Unity Congress convened by the revolutionary General Confederation of Labour of Brazil.

In *Argentina*, the leaders of the reformist General Confederation of Labour did not dare to come out openly against the amalgamation of the three trade unions of woodworkers in Buenos Aires, and the establishment of a single union.

In *Mexico*, where the trade union movement is more scattered than anywhere else, the leaders of the reformist trade union centres are now coming out as supporters of trade union unity.

In *India*, the amalgamation of the reformist All-Indian Congress and the Red Congress of Trade Unions has taken place (April, 1935).

In *China*, the workers, both members of the reformist Kuomintang trade unions and members of Red trade unions are realizing their united front struggles in numerous strikes, demonstrations, etc.

But it must be noted that in most of the colonial and semi-colonial countries (with the possible exception of Brazil), including *China*, the Communists underestimated the importance of united front and trade union unity tactics; they were unable to take the lead in and organize the growing urge of the mass of workers toward the united front and trade union unity and have thereby surrendered the initiative to the reformists and even to the national-reformist government (namely, *Mexico*).

Only by establishing a united front and a united trade union movement of the working class can the Communist Party really ensure a proletarian core in the anti-imperialist people's united front and greatly facilitate its struggle for the hegemony of the proletariat in the people's anti-imperialist and agrarian revolution. On the other hand, the establishment of a united anti-imperialist front considerably facilitates the formation of a united front and a united trade union movement of the working class, as has been shown now by the experience of *Brazil*, and before that, in the period of 1925-27, by the experience of *China*.

True, in many colonial and semi-colonial countries where the revolutionary trade union movement is underground, it is, of course, impossible to copy the methods and forms of the struggle of the mass of workers for the united front and trade union unity used in countries where the trade union movement is legal. I believe that one of the best and most effective methods and forms of struggle for a united front and trade union unity in those countries where our movement is illegal is the shifting of the main stress in trade union work to the establishment of small illegal, Red trade union groups, to work within all existing workers' mass organizations which enjoy legal or semi-legal existence, in order to win over these organizations.

A Decisive Improvement is Necessary In All Fields of Party Work

Moreover, it must be mentioned that for the successful accomplishment of the task of the Communists in colonial countries which is most important for the immediate future—the establishment, extension and consolidation of the anti-imperialist People's Front—

we must, while applying united front and trade union unity tactics, strive to achieve a real improvement in the tactics and in other important phases of Party work, namely:

1. In order to realize our new, wholly correct tactical line in the field of establishing and broadening the anti-imperialist People's Front, the Communist Party of China will not only fight with all the means at its disposal against the strong sectarian tendencies and traditions which exist in the Party organizations on the very questions of the anti-imperialist People's Front and trade union unity, etc., but will also revise a number of measures in the field of economic policy which it was forced to carry out in the past, primarily because of the protracted war and because of the limited resources of the former Central and other Soviet districts. For instance, the policy toward the kulaks will be made more precise. The policy with regard to small landowners who do not work their land themselves, but who, because of their economic and social condition can by no means be considered landed gentry, will be corrected. The fact is that the land of even these petty owners was often confiscated as a result of individual, incorrect instructions of local soviets to the effect that the land belonging to those who do not cultivate it themselves should be confiscated. The taxation, financial and trade policy, etc., will be reconsidered with a view to giving it *a more clearly expressed popular and clearly national character* in order to facilitate the mobilization and organization of the broadest masses of people throughout China under the leadership of the Communist Party and the Soviets around the national-revolutionary struggle.

2. In order that the Communist Party should really be able to win influence over the broad sections of the youth and draw them into active participation in the anti-imperialist and class struggle, it is necessary radically to revise the organization and the work of our Young Communist Leagues. Under the present conditions of China, for instance:

(a) From a narrow young workers' organization our Young Communist League must be transformed into a broad, mass organization which would really steer a course towards including the workers and peasants and the entire anti-imperialist youth;

(b) The Young Communist League, from copying the methods and forms of work of the Party, must begin a real political, cultural and military training of the youth by means of increasing the propaganda of Marxism-Leninism, by creating social-educational, sports and other types of organizations and by active work in all existing

mass youth organizations with the aim of winning them over, irrespective of who organized them, etc., etc.

*The Anti-Imperialist United Front, the Hegemony
of the Proletariat and Soviet Power*

The anti-imperialist united front, the hegemony of the proletariat and Soviet power are questions of the utmost political significance. Some people think that the participation of the Communist Party in the anti-imperialist united front signifies a weakening in its struggle for the hegemony of the proletariat and for Soviet power. This, of course, is absolutely incorrect.

The hegemony of the proletariat in the revolutionary movement is no abstract slogan, no empty phrase, but a concrete matter which expresses itself primarily in ideological, political and organizational leadership by the proletariat and its party of its allies in the revolution (peasantry, urban petty bourgeoisie), beginning with the partial struggle for their immediate demands and ending with the struggle for state power. The hegemony of the proletariat does not come of itself; the Communists must win it by means of systematic and unselfish practical work.

Soviet power cannot be established without the corresponding preparation of the masses at large and the Communist Party for the revolutionary struggle. Soviet power can be established only when the level of the class struggle is sufficiently high and when the forces of the proletariat and the peasantry, led by the Communist Party, are sufficiently great.

Further. The Communist Party of China has won the hegemony of the proletariat in the revolutionary struggle and has established Soviet power over a considerable part of the country precisely because from the very beginning of its development (as far back as 1924-25) and to this very day it has revealed itself before the entire people as an independent force and the vanguard in the anti-imperialist struggle, and, because it resolutely directs and leads the struggle of tens of millions of peasants for land, that is, the agrarian revolution. The Communist Party of Brazil is beginning to manifest itself as an independent political factor in the entire life of the country and is on the road to becoming a really mass party precisely at the present moment, when it has taken the initiative in creating the National Liberation Alliance as a concrete expression of the anti-imperialist People's Front in the present conditions of Brazil, and is

actively coming forward in the revolutionary mass struggle against imperialism and its agent—the reactionary Vargas government.

On the other hand, in those countries where the Communists were for a long time unable to create an anti-imperialist united front, the Communist Parties have not yet become strong, mass parties. These facts show that without the active participation of the Communists in the general people's and national struggle against imperialist oppression it is inconceivable that the Communist groups or the young, numerically small Party can be transformed into a real mass party, and without this the hegemony of the proletariat and Soviet power in their country is not to be thought of. Without a doubt imperialism is the principal and basic enemy of all the colonial peoples, and if the Communists are unable to come out against imperialism in the front ranks of the people, how can the people recognize in the Party its vanguard and leader?

But from this, comrades, one should not draw the conclusion that an incorrect application of these tactics by the Communists does not carry with it a serious danger for the Communist Party and the revolutionary movement. We know from the history of the struggle of the Communist Party of China that when the opportunists in its leadership, headed by Chen Tu-hsiu, counterposed the tactics of the united national front to the task of the class struggle at the critical moment of the revolutionary movement in 1927, when for the sake of retaining a united national front with a part of the national bourgeoisie these opportunists renounced the revolutionary struggle of the working class in defence of their vital interests, renounced the agrarian revolution of the peasantry, renounced the struggle for winning over national-revolutionary armies and for arming the workers and peasants and, finally, when these opportunists rejected an independent policy in regard to our temporary allies—they brought the 1927 revolution to defeat. But from this it is nevertheless quite clear that *it was not the anti-imperialist united front tactics themselves that were at fault, but the opportunists, who distorted these revolutionary tactics to suit the bourgeoisie and imperialism, who were at fault.*

III. THE PROBLEM OF FASCISM IN THE COLONIAL AND DEPENDENT COUNTRIES

Considering that fascism is the open, terrorist dictatorship of the most reactionary, most chauvinistic and most imperialistic elements of finance capital, considering that fascism grew out of the soil of the

bankrupt bourgeois-democratic regime, that Social-Democracy cleared the way to power for fascism (as we have seen, for instance, in Germany and Italy) there, can, of course, be no question of this kind of fascism in the colonial and dependent countries.

Nevertheless, it cannot be denied that in recent years, especially after fascism came to power in Germany, a so-called fascist movement has been growing in a number of colonial and dependent countries.

In *Brazil*, there is a fascist organization (the so-called Integralists) which has its branches in the provinces, in the districts, in the schools, the factories, the mills and on the landed estates. They have various departments including a department of propaganda and of culture, a military department, and a social-economic department. The strictest military discipline prevails in the organization. The leaders of this organization are mostly intellectuals—doctors, lawyers, etc.; but among these leaders there are also not a few large landlords, industrialists and bankers. In *Argentina* there is a similar organization—the “Civil Legion.” In *Mexico* there are the “Gold Shirts” (*Camisas Doradas*). In *Chile* there are National-Socialist organizations, etc., etc.

True, all these so-called fascist organizations, with the exception of the Brazilian Integralists, are to this day by no means mass organizations. All of them, by establishing connections with one or another imperialist power (in the first place, with fascist Germany), are nationally corrupt organizations and a weapon for the imperialist enslavement of their own people. All of them represent the most reactionary, the most counter-revolutionary and the darkest forces of their country. The economic, political and historical conditions of the colonial and dependent countries differ from the conditions in Germany, Italy, Austria, etc. In connection with all these circumstances the fascist movement in the colonial and dependent countries cannot, of course, grow in the same way, in the same forms and with such force as in Germany, Italy, etc.

Nevertheless, we should by no means underestimate the role and significance of the fascist movement and the fascist organizations in so far as this “fashionable” sign of reaction is utilized by the most counter-revolutionary elements among the landlords and bourgeoisie of the colonial and dependent countries for the organization of counter-revolutionary forces, for the struggle against a people’s revolution and for still further increasing the enslavement of the people of their own countries by imperialism. The fascist movement and the fascist organizations represent a particular danger for the revo-

lutionary liberation movement in the colonial and semi-colonial countries because the fascists everywhere in these countries, before everything else, resort to nationalist demagogy, which often meets with ready response from the masses. The fascists also widely disseminate social demagogy. By means of this demagogy they are sometimes able to draw in discouraged petty-bourgeois masses, which are called upon to play a role of considerable importance in the anti-imperialist struggle of the colonial and dependent countries. The fascists are particularly dangerous to us also because very many Communist Parties of the colonial and semi-colonial countries even now are unable to direct the anti-imperialist and anti-reactionary moods of the masses into the channel of revolutionary struggle, are unable to gain influence over the masses. From this it is clear that the struggle against fascist movements and fascist organizations in the colonial and semi-colonial countries is one of the most urgent and important tasks of our Parties.

As experience has shown, the struggle against fascism in the colonial and semi-colonial countries must now be conducted on two fronts: on the one hand against an attitude of disregard and underestimation of the danger and perniciousness of the fascist movement in one's own country (the error committed by many Communists in China), and against the tendency to exaggerate the significant role played by the fascist movement in one's own country, on the other. For instance, many of our comrades in the Latin-American countries characterize almost all bourgeois and petty-bourgeois parties as fascist or on the road to becoming fascist, thus hampering the establishment of an anti-imperialist and anti-fascist People's Front.

How, then, should the struggle against the fascist movement and against fascist organizations in the colonial and dependent countries be carried on?

I believe that of all the numerous and various tactical means the following are the most important and fundamental:

1. The organization of a really revolutionary mass anti-imperialist struggle and the establishment of an anti-imperialist and anti-fascist People's Front for the purpose of putting an end to the national demagogy of the fascists, their prime form of demagogy, in order to show the masses the real way out of their colonial and dependent condition. This produces good results.

2. Skillful methods of exposing the demagogy of the fascists by the Communists for the purpose of convincing the masses, on the basis of the latter's own experience, of the falsity of the fascists' promises.

3. In his report Comrade Dimitrov very correctly drew attention to the necessity of intensifying the ideological struggle against the fascists. In China, for instance, Chiang Kai-shek and his Blue Shirt League make use of the most backward, mediæval doctrines (Confucianism, Buddhism, etc.) for the purpose of duping the masses. They have distorted Sun Yat-sen's teachings in order to justify their capitulation to imperialism. Many Communists underestimate the importance of the ideological struggle against the Kuomintang and the Blue Shirt League. They think that all these are trifles, that they are all survivals of backwardness and mediævalism and that it is therefore impossible to win over the masses by struggling against these survivals. This, comrades, is wrong. It is true that Confucianism, Buddhism, etc., are survivals of backwardness and mediævalism, but besides the backward, mediæval, barbarian and aggressive what else can you find in the ideology of these representatives of decaying and dying classes? That is not the point. The point is that all this old ideology has deep roots in the traditions of the masses and exerts great influence over the masses of the people. It is therefore necessary to take these points of view into consideration. It is necessary patiently to explain to the broad masses of the people the origin and the real meaning of these points of view, as well as the attitude and views of the Communists on morality, ethics, etc., in order that the masses should understand that the Communists are the real heirs of all that is best and most valuable in our old traditions and culture and at the same time the creators of a new, higher and finer culture and morality.

As regards Sun Yat-senism, while pointing out the inconsistency and inadequacy as well as some of the errors of this school of thought, it is necessary to point out to the masses that Sun Yat-sen was a national revolutionary and that in his ideology and especially in his activity there is much that is valuable and much that is good, since what was most important to him, as he himself said in his legacy, is "the struggle for the independence and equality of China." At the same time, the masses must be shown that we—the Communists—are the heirs of Sun Yat-sen's best revolutionary traditions and ideas, since it is only we—the Communists—who tirelessly work and fight for the national emancipation and welfare of our people.

IV. THE ROLE AND SIGNIFICANCE OF COLONIAL REVOLUTIONS IN THE NEW ROUND OF REVOLUTIONS AND WARS

Whereas on the eve of and even during the first imperialist World War the colonies and semi-colonies served mainly as objects for division among the imperialists and really acted for the home countries as reserves of raw material, foodstuffs, labour power and military reinforcements, matters are entirely different now, on the eve and in the period of a new round of revolutions and wars. Under the influence of the great October Revolution and the triumph of socialism in the U.S.S.R., under the influence of the general crisis of capitalism and the world economic crisis, and as a result of the altered relation of class forces and the growth of the proletariat and the Communist Parties, the colonial and semi-colonial peoples will fill and are already filling an important historical role in the great struggle of mankind for the overthrow of imperialism and the victory of the international socialist revolution. (*Applause.*)

We must, nevertheless, mention the fact that not all Communists properly understand and recognize the role and importance of colonial revolutions. This is clearly shown by the attitude of our fraternal Parties in the capitalist countries towards the Chinese Revolution. Facts show that with the exception of our Japanese brother Party, which is heroically struggling against Japanese imperialism and for the defence of the Chinese people, and with the exception of our American brother Party, which has begun—even if it has only just begun, it is nevertheless a beginning—to collect funds for the Chinese Red Army, the only assistance rendered by our other fraternal Parties has so far been confined to agitation and propaganda. Meanwhile, the Chinese revolution is in actual need of support, primarily on the part of the workers of all the large imperialist countries. In this connection allow me on behalf of the whole of the Chinese people to express my thanks to Comrade Dimitrov who in his report assured us, amidst the thunderous applause of the entire Congress, of his firm determination to support the struggle of the Chinese people for its emancipation from all the imperialist beasts of prey and their Chinese agents. (*Applause.*) I take it, comrades, that by your thunderous applause, you, the representatives of the proletariat and oppressed peoples of the whole world, unanimously and heartily endorse this assurance of Comrade Dimitrov. After this the Chinese people has the right to expect practical measures in support of its liberation movement.

In connection with this, I would like to mention one extremely moving and outstanding act of genuinely revolutionary international solidarity performed by one of our heroic Japanese comrades a month and a half ago. On June 23, 1935, in Eastern Kirin, Lin-an County, a Japanese military chauffeur drove a motor-truck, loaded with 60,000 machine-gun and rifle bullets, hand grenades and bombs, to a lonely mountain spot where the anti-Japanese detachments of Chinese partisans usually hid. However, despite a long search, he could not find the partisans. When the gunfire of an attacking Japanese detachment could already be heard nearby the Japanese chauffeur decided to commit suicide.

The Chinese partisans repulsed the attack of the Japanese troops, and early on the morning of June 24 they found the motor truck with the dead chauffeur on a mountain path. In his pocket they found a farewell letter addressed to them. In this letter the unknown Japanese chauffeur wrote:

“Dear Comrades of the anti-Japanese people’s army and of all anti-Japanese partisan detachments:

“I have brought you a small gift—sixty thousand bullets, and many hand grenades and bombs. I would very much have liked to tell you of the unbounded love, solidarity and respect which the Communist Party of Japan and the Japanese working people feel towards you—national heroes—towards the entire Chinese people who are near and dear to us, and towards our valiant fraternal Communist Party of China, which together with us is carrying on the struggle against the Japanese imperialist vultures. I waited a long time for you, but can wait no longer. I can already hear the gunfire of the approaching Japanese troops. Only one thing remains for me to do under these circumstances. I cannot and will not return to the Japanese troops. I have decided to kill myself and leave you this little present. I don’t know, though, whether you will receive it. I hope you will.

“I shake your hand.

“With comradely greetings,

“One of your Japanese Communist comrades.

“June 23, 1935.”

(Loud applause. All the delegates rise. Cheers in honour of the heroic Japanese comrade. Cries of: “Long live the Communist Party

of China!" and "Long live the Communist Party of Japan!" from the Czechoslovakian delegation. Prolonged ovation. Delegates sing the "Internationale.")

This is not a chance act; it is an act of historic significance reflecting the mutual love, respect and solidarity of the two great peoples of the Far East. Yes, comrades! We Chinese are against Japanese imperialism, but we love the Japanese people. (*Applause.*) We are against Japanese imperialism because it oppresses, exploits and annihilates us, the Chinese people, but we love the Japanese people because the Japanese people is the nearest to us, the Chinese people, in point of history and culture, the most closely related in point of mutual understanding and respect. We love the Japanese people because like the Chinese people it is an industrious, noble and intelligent people. Finally, we especially love the Japanese people because together with us it is carrying on a struggle against one and the same common enemy—Japanese imperialism.

Yes, comrades! This was only one of our heroic Japanese comrade Communists. There must be many such heroes of revolutionary internationalism in the Japanese and in other Parties. And every such hero is worthy of the admiration and respect of the revolutionary and of the best minds of the world. I call upon all present at the congress to honour the memory of this, our unforgettable, beloved and revered immortal hero—our unknown Japanese comrade, by rising. (*All the delegates rise and sing "Comrades, the Bugles Are Sounding."*)

Eternal glory to our immortal hero!

Glory to our heroic Communist Party of Japan which has raised in its ranks such a heroic fighter of revolutionary internationalism!

Glory to the heroic Japanese working class and the Japanese working people which was able to produce this great son of whom the whole world may be proud!

Glory to our Leninist-Stalinist Communist International! Only in its ranks could such a truly great hero, who did not spare his life for the great cause of world revolution, be forged and tempered! (*Applause.*)

Comrades, I have already pointed out that not all Communists properly estimate and understand the role and the significance of colonial revolutions. This may be shown by the fact that certain Communists who work in capitalist countries usually regard colonial revolutions as something extraneous, or, at best, as insignificant, auxiliary forces of the world revolution. This is an entirely incorrect conception of

the role and significance of the colonial revolutions of the new epoch—the epoch of world proletarian revolution, one of whose component parts, according to Lenin and Stalin, is the colonial revolution.

Comrade Communists and Social-Democratic workers!, The matter of colonial revolutions is important not only because the peoples of the colonial and dependent countries constitute an absolute majority of mankind; it is important not only because the majority of the colonial peoples are actual toilers; it is important not only because parts of our own working class and its parties live and struggle in these countries. It is important because the actual rulers there are the same enemies of the people against whom and for the overthrow of whose rule we fight in our own home. A disparaging attitude towards colonial revolutions is one of the remnants of Social-Democratic deviations among Communists and advanced workers. We must decisively put an end to this!

In the present serious condition of the international class struggle we must at all costs strive to establish a real fighting worldwide united revolutionary front of the proletariat in capitalist countries with the oppressed peoples of the entire colonial world for a common struggle against the world counter-revolutionary united front of imperialism and its agents. (*Applause.*)

We have all the fundamental prerequisites for this. We have a common enemy—imperialism, we have a single program and the same aims of struggle for socialism, we have the strategy and tactics of the world revolution, we have the same fortress of revolutionary struggle—the U.S.S.R., we have the same world party—the Communist International—and we have the same teacher and leader—the great Stalin! (*All the delegates rise. Applause and cheers.*)

Comrades, we should always remember Lenin's last article, his last behest, in which he gave a clear evaluation of the perspectives for the development of post-war capitalism, the perspectives of struggle between capitalism and socialism, and at the same time appraised the role and significance of colonial revolutions in the decisive struggle between the socialist and capitalist worlds. At the end of this article Lenin wrote:

“The outcome of the struggle, in the final analysis, depends on the fact that Russia, India, China, etc., constitute an overwhelming majority of the population. And it is precisely this majority of the population that during the last few years is being drawn into the struggle for its emancipation with unusual rapidity, so that in

this sense there cannot be the shadow of a doubt as to what the final outcome of the worldwide struggle will be. In this sense, the final victory of socialism is fully and unconditionally assured."

Yes! The final victory of socialism is fully and unconditionally assured, especially now, when both the working class of the foremost imperialist countries and the oppressed peoples of the colonial world are rising in a common struggle against fascism, capitalism and imperialist wars, in a common struggle for Soviet power and socialism!

Forward, comrades! Raise higher the banner of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin! Raise high the banner of the Communist International! Forward to the victory of the world socialist revolution! (*Loud and prolonged applause. Cheers from the British, Spanish, Czech, Latin American, Arabian and other delegations. The Chinese delegation sing the "Internationale" and the March of the Chinese Red Army. The Italian delegation sing "Bandiera Rossa."*)

GOTTWALD: Comrades, it is no accident that the Seventh Congress of our International evokes exceptional attention throughout the whole world, among friends as well as foes.

This is to be explained by the fact that our Congress is engaged in discussing and solving the most urgent questions which affect the daily life of the working people in all countries. It is to be explained by the fact that after six years of unusual economic crisis in all capitalist countries—simultaneously with the victory of socialism on one-sixth of the earth's surface—all are desirous of hearing the voice of those who accomplished this "miracle," the voice of the Bolsheviks. Last but not least, it is to be explained by the fact that our Congress points out the most essential and decisive task, one that must be fulfilled, one that must be realized *today*, so that the working people of the various countries can create the prerequisites for accomplishing the same "miracle" *tomorrow*—that is, by the fact that *our Seventh Congress has placed in the centre of the policy of the Communist Parties the task of establishing unity of action of the proletariat and the People's Front, on a national and international scale, against the offensive of capital, against fascism, for peace and against imperialist war.*

It is clear that this was inevitably bound to evoke and indeed has evoked general attention.

It has actually aroused the rage of the fascists and their accomplices in all countries at the fact that the Communists are striving for a united front of all opponents of fascism, regardless of what separates

the Communists from those who belong to the petty-bourgeois anti-fascist opposition.

It has aroused the fear of all those fascist and imperialist elements who want to provoke predatory wars in order to bring about a new redivision of the world by fire and sword, at the expense of the small nations and of the Soviet Union.

It has caused anxiety among all those reactionary Social-Democratic leaders who, despite the very adverse experience of the working people with regard to the policy of class collaboration, still desire to continue this policy. In the interests of this policy they reject the united front of the proletariat, thus maintaining the split in the ranks of the working class.

Finally, it has given rise to hopes among all those who expect, and have every reason to expect, that, by the realization of proletarian unity of action and by the establishment of the People's Front on a national and international scale, they will be spared the Golgotha that the German working people have had to pass through.

The Seventh Congress of our International, and especially the report of Comrade Dimitrov, have clearly shown that *on our part*, we not only do not create any obstacles to the *immediate* establishment of working class unity of action in every country and throughout the world, but, on the contrary, we Communists are doing everything possible to remove the existing obstacles.

There are people in the world—Comrade Dimitrov appropriately dubbed them “political hens”—who persuade themselves that the Communists have given up their principles or are digressing from them. How ridiculous this is! An International whose leading Party is building socialism in one-sixth of the world while the capitalist world is writhing in hopeless chaos and relapsing into mediæval barbarism; an International whose guiding principles have stood the test of history precisely at a time when all antagonistic systems, theories and tactics have failed completely; an International which is converting into deeds the masterly teachings of Lenin and Stalin—such an International has indeed no need to change even one iota of its principles. If we are changing anything, it is the methods and forms, *with the help of which, in a changed situation*, we can cause our basic principles to penetrate still more deeply among the masses, *and create unity of action of the working class in order to repulse the class enemy and launch an attack against it.*

The Seventh Congress of the Communist International has also aroused great attention in Czechoslovakia. And it could not be other-

wise! For in Czechoslovakia the question of establishing working-class unity of action against the offensive of capital, against fascism, for peace and against imperialist war is just as urgent a task as in other capitalist countries.

The attacks of capital on the standard of living of the working people continue to develop further. There are approximately 800,000 unemployed in Czechoslovakia. Unemployment relief is miserable, and a considerable section of the unemployed are altogether without support. The earnings of the employed workers are low, while the cost of living is rising. The toiling peasantry and artisans are being ruined by taxes, debts, interest and by the competition of big capital. In Czechoslovakia there are entire sections of the country where starvation prevails, as for instance in the German districts, in the Carpatho-Ukraine and in Slovakia. The entire burden of the crisis is being shifted onto the shoulders of the working people. Hence, what can be of more immediate concern than the establishment of a mighty united front of the working class and the joint struggle to shift the burden of the crisis onto the capitalists?

The danger of fascism is growing. During the parliamentary elections in May 1935, Hitler's agency in Czechoslovakia, the so-called "Fatherland Front" of the Sudeten Germans, emerged as the strongest party in the country. It is true that *Czech* fascism did not by a long way achieve such great successes in the elections as it expected, but it would be a mistake to underestimate the fascist danger, the more so since the state apparatus is overrun with more or less open fascist elements and in the bourgeois coalition parties there are also influential reactionary elements which are closely akin to the fascists. Hence, what is more urgent than the task of uniting all anti-fascist forces into one camp so that the experience of Germany shall not be repeated in Czechoslovakia?

German imperialism threatens a number of countries. Czechoslovakia is one of the first countries within its immediate firing range. The Czech people are threatened with the loss of their national independence; the German, Slovakian, Hungarian, Ukrainian and Polish peoples in Czechoslovakia are in danger of coming under the heel of German, Hungarian and Polish fascism. The working people of Czechoslovakia, regardless of nationality, are vitally interested in preserving peace and maintaining the closest alliance with the Soviet Union. In the meantime, however, the dark forces of reaction are intriguing to divert Czechoslovakia from alliance with the Soviet Union and to drive the former into the meshes of fascist Germany's war

policy. Hence, what is more important than to unite all friends of peace and all opponents of imperialist war into a common front, for joint struggle against this danger?

Indeed, no more valuable time must be lost. Neither Hitler nor the Czech reactionaries remain idle. Hitler is mobilizing his forces and with the aid of the fascist "Fatherland Front," his agency in Czechoslovakia, he seeks to establish closer ties with the most reactionary circles of the Czech, Slovakian and Hungarian bourgeoisie. His prime aim is to alter the line of Czechoslovakia's foreign policy and to make Prague a branch of fascist Berlin. To the Czech fascists, the Preisses and Strimys, to the reactionary elements in the Czech Agrarian Party, as well as in the Catholic party, to the Stoupals, Kyjovskys and Staseks, to the Slovakian and Hungarian reactionaries, the Hlinkas and Esterhazys—to all of them the good relations between Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union are a thorn in the flesh. Common hatred of all that is socialist, proletarian and progressive brings all these dark forces into a reactionary bloc which strives for the complete enslavement of the working people of Czechoslovakia by fascist dictatorship. And the issue stands as follows: *If Czechoslovakia is to be spared the horrors of fascist barbarism, if it is not to come under the jackboot of fascist Germany, if it is not to be dragged into sanguinary war adventures, if the Czech people are not to be driven to a new White Mountain¹ and the other peoples of Czechoslovakia placed under the knife of Hitler, Horthy and the Polish fascists—then it is necessary to work with the utmost speed to bring about working class unity of action in Czechoslovakia and to create a wide People's Front of all anti-fascists, all democrats, all progressive elements, regardless of nationality or party affiliation, a People's Front in defence of labour, freedom and peace.*

The Communist Party of Czechoslovakia has fought and continually fights for the realization of such unity of action and for the establishment of a united People's Front of all anti-fascist and anti-war elements, in order that in this way the working people of Czechoslovakia may create for themselves the prerequisites not only for successful defence but also for counter-attack.

The reactionary leaders of the Czechoslovakian Socialist Parties participating in the government, working in closest cooperation with the bourgeoisie, were and are—to the detriment of the working-class cause—opponents of joint struggle with the Communists. They have learned

¹ Reference is to the battle of White Mountain (1620).

nothing from the unhappy example of Germany. But the attitude of the mass of rank-and-file members of the Socialist Parties is altogether different. The lessons of Hitler's victory, on the one hand, and the example of the united anti-fascist struggles in Austria, Spain and France, on the other hand, have exerted a mighty influence on the masses of socialist workers in Czechoslovakia and have intensified their efforts to bring about a united front. And if Czech fascism during the last parliamentary elections failed to increase its strength to the degree it expected, this is primarily due to the united anti-fascist struggle of the Czech Socialist workers and Communists, waged during these elections. Above all, we can record with joy that the *socialist youth* as a whole is beginning to come closer to the young revolutionary workers and is thus facilitating the establishment of the united front of the proletariat. How much more successfully could the working people of Czechoslovakia defend their interests against the class enemy, how much more rapidly and easily could the widest unity of action be achieved, if the reactionary elements, who have the upper hand in the leadership of the Socialist Parties did not fight with such persistence and virulence against their own workers and their efforts to bring about a united front!

However, the enemies of the united front in Czechoslovakia feel that they are being worsted in their arguments against the united front. This is shown by the anxiety that the work of our Congress has aroused among them. They correctly feel that the decisions of our Seventh World Congress will serve as a mighty stimulus to a more rapid achievement of proletarian unity of action and of the anti-fascist People's Front on a national and international scale. That is why they now so laboriously dig up everything that they have referred to in the past as obstacles to the establishment of closer ties between the revolutionary vanguard and the rest of the working people of Czechoslovakia, primarily the Czech working people.

In commenting on Comrade Pieck's opening speech at our Congress, the central organ of Czech Social-Democracy, *Pravo Lidu*, wrote:

"Moscow at last makes possible a new and better form of collaboration between Social-Democracy and the Communists; it removes the obstacle which we regard as the major obstacle to the establishment of joint action by the working class for the defence of democracy and peace against fascism."

Thus writes the *Pravo Lidu*. As a matter of fact the Communists of Czechoslovakia put neither major nor minor obstacles in the way of

the united front, so that "Moscow" had no need to remove them at all—but we do not wish to quarrel over this. Let us also set aside the fact that the same *Pravo Lidu*, in the same commentary in which it referred to the "removal of the major obstacle," concocts new, apparently subsidiary obstacles. Let us set aside these reservations. Let us keep to the positive utterances of the *Pravo Lidu*. You say that the main obstacle to the united front has been removed. Well then, from this platform we once again propose: let us negotiate without delay. The proposals that we have repeatedly made to you remain fully valid. We are prepared to start immediate negotiations regarding these proposals. We are prepared to discuss your proposals as well. In the *Pravo Lidu* of July 30, 1935, in the article "Not Only 'Against' But Also 'For,'" you reproach us for always being only "against" and never "for." That is not true.

We want to see the Socialist Parties establish fighting unity with us, firstly, *for* having the burdens of the economic crisis shifted onto the shoulders of the capitalists. We are, for instance, *for* the confiscation of the one and a half billions from the Zivno Bank which it acquired by entirely illegal means, by surcharging worthless Austrian money. We are *for* forcing the capitalists to pay their arrears in taxes, amounting to billions, by executive action. On the other hand, we are *for* annulling the debts and taxes of the working peasants and artisans. We are *for* heavy taxation of the many billions of stabilization funds belonging to the banks and joint-stock companies, which funds have hitherto not been taxed. We are *for* the sequestration of the property and factories of capitalists who desire to evade payment of taxes by closing their factories and throwing the workers on to the streets. We are *for* using the funds obtained by heavy taxation of the rich to provide work for the unemployed, to render immediate emergency assistance to the starving German people and, in general, use these funds for the benefit of the working people. We are *for* wiping out the debts of the poor peasants, artisans and small traders at the expense of the big landowners and the banks. We are, of course, *against* wage-cuts, reductions in unemployment benefits, and bailiffs being sent to collect the debts of the peasants, artisans and small traders; we are *against* profiteering on the prime necessities of life.

Secondly, we want the Socialist Parties to join in fighting unity with us *for* the purpose of blocking the road to fascism. If we fight jointly for shifting the burden of the crisis onto the shoulders of the rich; if the workers, peasants, artisans and small traders, the working intellectuals, the youth and the working people of the non-Czech

nationalities see that socialist unity in struggle *actually* defends their social interests—then this will cut the ground from under the feet of the fascist demagogues. Then neither Henlein's hirelings, nor the Stribrnys, Gajdas or other fascists will have any success in their attempts to dupe the people. Further, we are *for* having the fascist high-rank bureaucrats and officers removed from the state apparatus and the army, and we want to see the soldiers granted civil rights. We are *for* joint action to prevent the fascists from securing control of the Sokol athletic clubs, the rifle clubs, peasant riding organizations, etc. We are *for* joint defence of all democratic rights of the working people and for a joint struggle to extend these rights. It stands to reason that we are *against* working-class organizations being dissolved, Communists imprisoned and fascists acquitted.

Finally, we want the Socialist Parties to establish fighting unity with us *for* preserving peace and preventing Czechoslovakia from becoming a victim of Hitler. We are *for* the closest alliance of Czechoslovakia with the Soviet Union. We are *for* consistent support of the peace policy of the Soviet Union. We are *for* jointly suppressing all tendencies that seek to convert Prague into a branch of fascist Berlin. But, of course, we are *against* people being sentenced for shouting "Long live the Soviet Union!" while Czech fascists, who negotiate with Hitler agents and pay visits to Goebbels, are acquitted.

You see, our platform of the united front with the Socialist Parties is in fact extremely positive, it contains not only "against's" but also "for's." This platform concerns things, which in most cases were promised to the people in one form or another, prior to the elections, and not only by the Socialist Parties, but even by the Agrarians. What, therefore, can prevent them from fighting jointly with us for the realization of any of these positive points, which correspond to the interests of the working people? Obviously, nothing except regard for the interests of the capitalists.

We do not agree, of course, with the Social-Democratic view that participation of Social-Democratic leaders in a bourgeois coalition government, which, for instance, is at present the case in Czechoslovakia, is a barrier to fascism. We refer in this connection to the experience of other countries. But we do not make it a condition of the united front with the Socialist Parties that they should withdraw from the government; we want a united front with them, in spite of their participation in the government. We want this united front in order to achieve the fulfilment of the vital demands of the working class and the people, without departing even one inch from our basic standpoint

regarding the policy of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie and participation in bourgeois coalition governments. Without ceasing for a moment in our efforts to have our views on this question accepted by the majority of the working people, we say to those who still sincerely believe in the expediency of Social-Democratic leaders participating in bourgeois governments: You know that we do not share your view on this. But let it pass. At present your Ministers are in the government. According to their own assurances, they entered it in order to defend the interests of the people. We Communists also defend the interests of the people. Well, then, let us defend these interests together! Let the Social-Democratic Ministers in the government propose such measures as aim at shifting at least a part of the burden of the crisis onto the shoulders of the capitalists. We will support even the smallest step in this direction, in parliament and outside parliament. Let the Social-Democratic Ministers in the government see to it that the working people are not deprived of a particle of their democratic rights. We will support every measure in this direction inside parliament and outside parliament. Let the Social-Democratic Ministers in the government propose and ensure that the activity of the fascists, these agents of the most reactionary sections of finance capital, shall not be tolerated. Let them especially insist that the state apparatus and the army be purged of fascist high-rank bureaucrats and officers, and that the soldiers be granted all civil rights. We shall support even the smallest step in this direction in parliament and outside parliament.

I can anticipate the following objection: "The Social-Democrats in the government and the Social-Democrats and Communists in parliament are in the minority. The bourgeois parties in the government and in parliament will be against these and similar measures and we shall not be in a position to put them through." To this we reply: "In that case, the united front of the proletariat from below, outside parliament, in every factory and mill, in every locality, throughout the country, is only so much the more necessary. In that case, it is more than ever necessary to call upon the masses to take action so that those who are negotiating with the class enemy can more effectively point to the fact that there is wide mass support for the demands they advance."

The Presidium of the Czech Socialist Party, the party of Foreign Minister Beneš, has adopted as an answer, so to say, to the work of the Seventh Congress of our International, a special resolution on the question of working-class unity of action. Let the Communist first

of all clearly declare "their attitude to democracy," they say in this resolution. But this attitude has long been clear!

The whole world knows that we Communists are supporters of *Soviet* democracy, of this *proletarian* democracy, of this—as long as classes exist—widest democracy which corresponds *best of all* to the interests of the working people. We fight for this democracy. If, however, *bourgeois* democracy, and the democratic rights which it ensures the working people—rights won by the working people in severe struggle—are attacked by fascism, then, of course, we are for the *defence* of these democratic rights. And if you like us to call this "defence of democracy," very well, then! We do not wish to quarrel over what it should be called. But if you regard our favourable attitude to *Soviet* democracy as an obstacle to joint struggle against the fascist menace to *bourgeois* democracy, then I should like to explain your standpoint to a rank-and-file member of your party by means of the following comparison.

Imagine two men in fetters. One of them has "only" his feet fettered; this one lives under the conditions of bourgeois democracy. The other is bound hand and foot and has a gag in his mouth; he lives under the conditions of fascist dictatorship. The first one is threatened with the same danger. A Communist comes to him and says: "Do not allow yourself to be bound hand and foot, let us jointly defend ourselves against this danger." A Social-Democratic or Czech Socialist leader, an opponent of the united front, comes forward and declares: "Stop, that will not do! First of all you must realize that it is right that your feet are fettered. You must not demand that the fetters on your feet should ever be cut!" In contrast to this the Communist says to the man who has "only" his feet fettered: "For what purpose have you your hands free? Only to use them to drudge for the masters? Does it not occur to you that you should and must use them for another purpose as well: to tear asunder the fetters on your feet and become entirely free? (*Applause.*) Therefore, don't let your hands be fettered. Let us jointly defend ourselves against this danger and at the first opportunity we shall use our free hands to destroy the fetters on our feet. Then we will see whether anyone dares to attack us." But, the Social-Democratic or Czech Socialist leader comes forward again and says: "I do not agree with that at all. My position is that if this man seeks to destroy the fetters on his feet, I cannot wage a joint struggle today to prevent his hands being chained." Now, my dear friend, what would you say to such a man?

I think that the reply which a worker would give to such a leader would not be exactly agreeable to the leader.

"First of all, make a clear statement on your attitude towards the republic"—the opponents of the united front further say, and they think that they have thereby once more put a stumbling block in the path of the Socialist and Communist workers who are coming closer together. But this question is quite clear, too!

We desire that this republic, now ruled by the bourgeoisie, should become a *Soviet* republic, a *socialist* republic, ruled by the working people. That is our goal, and we are fighting to achieve it. But if this *bourgeois-democratic* republic is threatened by blood-thirsty fascism, then we shall defend the republic against fascism and call upon all true Socialists, democrats and republicans to form a united front for joint struggle, so that this republic shall be spared the greatest disgrace, and its working people the greatest catastrophe, namely, brutal fascist dictatorship. And if we are decidedly against this republic being handed over to the gangs of the *Czech* Hitlerites, we are just as decidedly against it being placed under the yoke of the *German* Hitlerites. In the struggle against both, we join forces with every one, we defend the republic against the fascists at home, as well as against foreign fascists. But, gentlemen, the republic must give us the *possibility* to do this. It must grant the organizations of the working people full freedom. It must grant freedom to the various nationalities of our country. It must not persecute the workers. It must not throw Communists and revolutionary workers into prison. If it does that—and it has done so hitherto—then it itself makes its defence *impossible*.

The masses of the *Czech* working people are filled with anxiety for the fate of their national independence. We *Czech* Communists share this anxiety. Precisely for this reason we say to the *Czech* workers, peasants, artisans and working intellectuals: Remember the history of your own nation! When did the *Czech* nation reach the height of its glory? *In the days of the Hussites when it carried out the revolution, when in plebeian fashion it settled accounts with the Czech lords! (Applause.) At that time the Czech nation was invincible and made the lords of all Europe tremble with fear.* When, on the other hand, did it come to the disgrace of the White Mountain? This happened when counter-revolution conquered and the *Czech* nation was once again under the yoke of the *Czech* lords who led it to national servitude. And, precisely in order to prevent history repeating itself, it is necessary to follow the road pointed out by the Communists. Do not believe those who try to convince you that the Communists

are indifferent to the national independence of the Czech people, or that their policy leads to the loss of national independence. On the contrary, *it is the policy of the Czech bourgeoisie, of the Czech landlords, of the Preisses, the Hodacs and Stribrnys which is leading the people to a new White Mountain!*

It is precisely the fascist wing of the Czech bourgeoisie which, in its inveterate hatred of everything socialist, is hatching new plots and is undermining the present friendly relations between Czechoslovakia and the Soviet Union, although it is clear that the Soviet Union is the bulwark of peace and a support for Czechoslovakia against the expansion of Hitler imperialism. It is precisely the fascist circles of the Czech bourgeoisie who are pressing for a change in Czechoslovakia's present foreign policy in the direction of Berlin, although it is clear that this would mark the beginning of the end of Czechoslovakian independence. It is precisely the fascist circles of the Czech bourgeoisie who wish to drive Czechoslovakia into participating, to please Hitler, in the crusade against the Soviet Union, although it is clear that this would mean immeasurable terror and suffering for the working people of all the nationalities of Czechoslovakia. Therefore, have not the Czech working people a thousand reasons to brand this fascist gang with the mark of high treason?

They would have you believe that the Communists, who are against the oppression of the non-Czech nationalities of Czechoslovakia, allegedly menace the national independence of the Czech people. What a shameless lie! Who is it that helps Hitler, Horthy and the Polish fascists most of all? Those who cruelly exploit the German, Slovakian, Hungarian, Ukrainian and Polish working people. Those who deprive them of their rights and freedom. And all of this is done by the Czech bourgeoisie, especially its reactionary section! The Communists have declared hundreds of times that they are against yielding even a single village to Hitler's Third Reich, to Horthy's Hungary or to fascist Poland. But the best safeguard against the occupation of our territory will be provided by the elimination of social and national oppression. To give work, bread, land and freedom to the German, Slovakian, Hungarian, Ukrainian and Polish peoples of Czechoslovakia means to erect the strongest barrier against Hitler, Horthy and the Polish fascists. Is it not clear that the Czech people are vitally interested in the achievement of this? Is it not clear, on the contrary, that the Czech bourgeoisie, by maintaining social and national oppression, betrays also the national interests of the Czech people? Indeed, this is quite clear.

Therefore, from whatever aspect we approach it, everything points to the possibility and necessity of creating unity of action of the working class of Czechoslovakia. There are *no grounds whatsoever* to justify the policy of the opponents of the united front, of those who in the interests of harmony and collaboration with the bourgeoisie maintain the split in the working class.

The fighting unity of the Communists and Socialists in Czechoslovakia would at *one* stroke increase the political significance and power of attraction of the working class. The fighting unity of the Communists and Socialists means some three million votes out of a total number of about eight million voters; it means a million workers organized in trade unions; it means a million workers organized in consumers' cooperatives. And if, as the Communists propose, all the parties mentioned adopt a line of action aimed at the rapid unification of the trade unions, the cooperatives and other mass organizations, then these organizations could become the centre of attraction for all unorganized workers as well as for those who for one reason or another have allowed themselves to be misled by the employers' or fascist organizations.

Such working class unity of action would have a marked effect on the peasantry, the artisans, small traders and working intellectuals; it would influence the rank-and-file members of the Agrarian Party, the Catholic People's Party and Artisans' and Traders' Party. It would be the basis for creating a *wide People's Front*.

In all these parties there are real democratic anti-fascist elements. And it is to them that we Communists appeal. To them we propose the establishment of a wide People's Front against the capitalist offensive, against fascism, for peace and against imperialist war—a People's Front in defence of labour, freedom and peace.

As was always the case whenever the demand of the Socialist workers and sincere democrats for the realization of the united front was especially strong, so also on this occasion the opponents of the united front among the leadership of the Socialist parties of Czechoslovakia, have brought forward their old argument: "Let the Communists enter the government coalition." How is it at all possible to take such a proposal seriously? They "invite" us to join the government and at the same time they have us thrown in jail, they have warrants issued against us and sentence us to long terms of imprisonment. The proposal is too transparent! But we do not by any means evade a serious discussion on the question of the government.

Yes, the Communists strive for unity of action of the proletariat and

for a People's Front of all anti-fascists and supporters of peace, *not only* in order to enable the working people to defend themselves against the attacks of the class enemy, but also in order to enable them to gather their forces for a powerful *counter-attack*. And when, in the process of this counter-attack, the positions of the bourgeoisie have been shaken, and those of the proletariat strengthened to such an extent that the bourgeoisie can no longer control the masses that have come into motion, then the question may arise of *forming a government of the united front or a government of the People's Front*—a government the character and program of which were dealt with here by Comrade Dimitrov with such clarity.

Yes, we are for *such* a government—for a government which would base itself on the mighty united front of the working class, linked up with a wide People's Front, embracing the working peasantry, the small traders and artisans and working intellectuals. We are for a government which would really fight against the fascists, eradicate the fascist elements from the state apparatus and the army, disarm and dissolve the fascist organizations, grant all civil rights to the soldiers, grant full freedom to all anti-fascist organizations, and arm the anti-fascists. We are for a government which would pursue a strong policy with regard to the capitalists, bankers and big landowners, impose proper taxes on them and introduce workers' control over production in their factories. We are for a government which would mercilessly penetrate into the pockets of the rich so that work and bread could be provided for the people. We are for a government which would render aid to the working peasants, artisans and small traders at the expense of the big capitalists and big landlords. We are for a government which would give the German, Slovakian, Hungarian, Ukrainian and Polish working peoples of Czechoslovakia work, bread, equal rights and freedom so that these peoples should really feel that Czechoslovakia was their home. We are for a government which would mercilessly settle accounts with all those who enter into agreements with fascist Germany, who would like to bring Czechoslovakia under the tutelage of fascist Berlin and place it in the service of Berlin's predatory war policy. We are for a government which would establish the closest alliance with the Soviet Union and consistently fight together with it on the international arena for the preservation of world peace. Yes, we are in favour of *such* a government. *Such* a government we shall support with all our strength.

We Communists of Czechoslovakia are conscious of our international responsibility. Surrounded by fascist states, we shall do everything to

prevent Czechoslovakia being engulfed by the fascist wave; we shall do everything to make Czechoslovakia a fortress of the anti-fascist and anti-war struggle in Central Europe. We feel ourselves closely bound up with the proletariat of Germany, Austria, Hungary and Poland, and especially with our heroic German sister Party and its leader, our Comrade Thaelmann. (*Stormy applause*). *Their cause is our cause, their struggle is our struggle.* And in fighting in solidarity with our sister Parties in Germany, Austria, Hungary and Poland, we not only fight to protect Prague against fascism, but also to help to liberate Berlin, Vienna, Budapest and Warsaw from the fascist barbarians. (*Stormy applause, shouts of "Rot Front" and "Hurrah," militant cheers in all languages.*)

VENTURA: We find the best confirmation of the correctness of Comrade Dimitrov's report and theses in the October battles in Asturias. There unity in the struggle was a reality, and the power and influence of our Party ensured revolutionary leadership of the struggle. The October events in Asturias represented a mass uprising of the people against fascism and for popular government, and the proletarian united front was the driving force of this struggle. That was why we could achieve victory. We are proud of this, for no one except the Communists pointed out this road as the only possible road to victory.

Responding to the call we issued after the October events, the leadership of the Socialist Party and of the reformist trade unions agreed to the formation of a Contact Committee consisting of representatives of their national organizations and the organizations of our Party and the Red trade unions. This Committee adopted the following common platform:

1. A struggle for material and political assistance to the comrades who have been imprisoned or are being hounded in connection with the October uprising.
2. A campaign for the release of the prisoners and for amnesty.
3. A struggle for the reopening of all people's centres and workers' clubs which are still shut down.
4. A struggle to regain the democratic rights of the working people.
5. A struggle for the dissolution of the fascist organizations.

However, when it came to mobilizing the masses for the realization of this program difficulties arose.

Our Socialist comrades did not see that, in spite of the offensive of the fascists and the reactionary industrialists, the masses must be led into the struggle for their most urgent economic demands and for

the realization of the several points of our common program. They were of the opinion that every open action would only bring in its train more drastic reprisals on the part of the enemy. They did not see the necessity of appealing to all the organizations which were affiliated to the Contact Committees. That alone could at that time have given a powerful impetus to the entire campaign for united action and for the formation of Contact Committees and Workers' Alliances. Actually, this was achieved only nine months after the October events, when we had finally succeeded in convincing the Socialists of the necessity of issuing a joint manifesto for a campaign against capital punishment.

As for setting up Workers' Alliances, the Socialist comrades have declared at all meetings wherever this question was brought up that they agreed to the formation of such organizations on a local and provincial scale, but opposed the organization of a national alliance. However, the instructions issued to the lower organizations are not sufficiently clear, and as a result the local Socialist Party leaders resist them or vacillate. In spite of all this we have succeeded—in the period from October to this day—in forming over two hundred Alliances throughout the country and have thereby opened up great prospects for their further development.

The alignment of forces in Spain may be characterized as follows. On one side we see the ruling classes with their internal struggle for economic group interests, as well as with serious differences of opinion on the question of the tactics to be pursued in order to throttle the revolution and establish a fascist dictatorship. The monarchists and the avowed fascists stress the necessity of a coup d'état, whereas the supporters of the tendency represented by Gil Robles fear the resistance of the masses and recommend that the German method be followed. These differences of opinion, as well as the mass struggle, have so far hindered them in building up a totalitarian party for the establishment of a fascist dictatorship. It would, however, be a serious mistake to overlook the efforts that are being made by the reactionary sections to rally and speedily organize their forces. On the other side we see the proletariat, steeled in the crucible of five years of revolution, rich in revolutionary experience and trained in the various forms of the class struggle—from parliamentary struggle to the general strike, from partial struggles to armed uprising—but still split and disunited.

This is the most vulnerable spot of the Spanish Revolution, and the source from which fascism is drawing its energy. Thus in Spain it is now a question of tempo—a question of who will first succeed in uniting their forces: the bourgeoisie and the landlords, or the workers

and peasants. This is what will decide the issue; this is what will decide the fate of the working people for the entire ensuing period.

All the prerequisites exist for bringing up the question of a government of the united front or of the anti-fascist People's Front of which Comrade Dimitrov has spoken. It is absolutely clear that, after the experience of the five years of the republic, the masses will under no circumstances want a repetition of April 14. Everybody, including the Socialist and Republican leaders, knows this.

There is a reactionary wing in the Socialist Party, led by Besteiro, vehement in its condemnation of the October uprising, fighting the Left elements, shunning the Left front and fighting it like a plague. Fortunately, these elements are a minority. Still they represent an increasingly serious danger.

We declare that we are ready to work out the terms of an agreement for united action with all those who want to fight against fascism in Spain; that we are ready to draw up an agreement that will include all sections of the country—from top to bottom, from the principal cities to the most remote hamlet—all the oppressed nationalities and all sectors of the labour movement; that, with this broad proletarian united front as a basis, we are ready to rally the large masses around an anti-fascist People's Front, and to work for the inclusion of all Left Republicans. The present is a particularly momentous juncture. The great experience of the victory of the anti-fascist People's Front in France with its tremendous reverberations in all sections of the working people of our country shows us the way. Hence, the conclusions that we draw at the present Congress, and that fully correspond to the requirements of the struggle in our country, consist in the following:

1. The entire political activity of our Party must revolve around the task of organizing Workers' and Peasants' Alliances. We must give these Alliances a revolutionary program, turn them in practice into the mainspring of the entire united front movement of the workers and peasants, as well as of all the other exploited masses, draw into them our Anarchist comrades, and transform these Alliances into live organs of the struggle for the immediate demands of the labouring masses and for preparing the seizure of power.

2. This is to furnish a basis for bringing about the proletarian united front and the unity of all anti-fascists, and at the same time for the organization and consolidation of the anti-fascist People's Front which should draw support from the common aims—such as, for instance, the expropriation of the large landowners, transference of

the land to the peasants, democratic liberties, emancipation of the oppressed nationalities, amnesty, the dissolution and disarming of the fascist organizations, etc.—and could thus serve as a basis for the formation of an anti-fascist people's government. Such a government, relying for support on the Workers' and Peasants' Alliances, would smash the resistance of fascism and the offensive of capital and thereby open up new possibilities and perspectives for the further development of the revolution.

3. In the sphere of trade union work we must overcome the sectarian tendencies and proceed boldly to amalgamate the dual trade unions in each locality, to build up single trade unions along industrial lines, and to form a single trade union centre on the platform of the class struggle. Simultaneously we must unhesitatingly raise the question of a single revolutionary party of the proletariat, while at the same time overcoming the last doubts of the brave Socialist workers and fighters in the October uprising, striving for organizational unity, and safeguarding the necessary guarantees of revolutionary principles. With regard to our youth and the Socialist youth, we must strive for their early amalgamation in a single organization embracing the entire anti-fascist youth.

We, the Communists of Spain, are infused with new energy by the fact that, for the first time in history, our revolution has shown how a fascist dictatorship can be overthrown. I refer to the overthrow of the dictatorship of Primo de Rivera by the Spanish Revolution of 1930 and 1931, when the period of the relative stabilization of capitalism was drawing to its close. At present the counter-revolution has raised its head, trying to make up for lost time. But the proletariat of Spain, which will be able to use the rich experience and the lessons of this Congress to correct its mistakes, will again overthrow fascism and the power of the bourgeois and landlords, this time dealing them a final blow, and bring about the triumph of the workers' and peasants' revolution.

Firmly confident of our victory, we greet the splendid and irrevocable victories of socialism in the Soviet Union. Under the banner of Lenin and Stalin we march with heads raised high towards victory. (*Loud applause.*)

KOPLINIC: Comrades, Comrade Dimitrov's report, with which the Austrian delegation is fully in agreement, will be of tremendous significance for the further development of the class struggle in Austria and particularly for the already well advanced process of uniting the

Austrian working class. We are firmly convinced that this report will evoke a strong response and general acclamation in the Austrian working class.

The great class battle of February—the armed struggles of February 12-14, 1934—wrought a profound change in Austria and in the Austrian working class.

The events of February 1934 were intended by the fascists to be a means of settling accounts with the working class. The events of February were meant to lead to the demolition of the class organizations of the proletariat. In the increasingly tense situation created by the imperialist contest over Austria, a victory gained by the Heimwehr fascists at the expense of the working class was to decide the issue in favour of Italy.

The February battles ended with the military defeat of the fighting workers, who had been left in the lurch by the Social-Democratic Party and who at that time still lacked the leadership of the Communist Party. However, fascism failed in its main objective—that of actually smashing the labour movement. Despite its military victory, it was unable to break the class strength of the Austrian proletariat.

The February battles were an expression of the political crisis in Austria. With the military defeat of the Schutzbund and of the workers who participated in the struggle, the elements of the political crisis—far from being removed—were aggravated. Austria and its fascist system are to this day in the throes of a political crisis.

What are the elements of the political crisis in Austria?

The most important element is the firm and growing resistance of the decisive sections of the proletariat to fascism, which resistance has prevented the stabilization of the fascist system. This fact also accounts for the great international significance of the February battles in Austria. The February struggles spiked the notions, cultivated in the working-class masses by reformism, that a victory of fascism was inevitable.

The course of development in Austria after the February events furnishes an example of international significance, showing that fascism is unable to win any support among the masses of a working class that has opposed it in armed struggle. The successful resistance of the working class to the "coordination" efforts of fascism in Austria further shows that, even after a bloody victory over the workers, the attempts of the fascist system to smash the working class remain unsuccessful.

A peculiar feature which characterizes the conditions under which the Austrian proletariat is carrying on its struggle against fascism is

the close intertwining of the foreign and home policies of Austrian fascism in their influence both on the form the latter assumes and on its tactics. The struggle of the imperialist states over Austria, particularly the struggle between fascist Italy and fascist Germany, has become a determining factor in the fight of Austrian fascism against the proletariat and in its efforts to win it over. This antagonism between the imperialist powers in the struggle over Austria has split the Austrian bourgeoisie into two camps, and has thereby weakened Austrian fascism.

The economic weaknesses and the split of fascism have extremely narrowed down the mass basis of the ruling system.

If for no other reason, fascism has failed in its efforts to win over the workers because after the February events it was forced to pass on openly to a general offensive against the social rights of the working class. The split in fascism divided also the sections of the petty bourgeoisie and peasantry influenced by fascism into two camps. It was this in the first place that prevented the concentration of the petty bourgeoisie into a fascist mass movement. It also prevented the formation of a unified fascist party in Austria.

German fascism took advantage of the weaknesses of Austrian fascism after the February events to engineer a coup, which was attempted on July 25. The organizers of the coup of July 25 calculated on getting the support of the workers. But July 25 brought the National-Socialists defeat, because it was precisely the support of the workers that they failed to obtain.

However, there are also other causes for the particular weak spots characterizing the fascist regime in Austria. One of the most unfavourable factors which Austrian fascism has to contend with is the particular weakness of its economic system, which has led to an enormous growth of unemployment. The fascist system has been unable to effect any change in this respect. It has been unable to bring about any essential improvements. Its economic weakness has thus further diminished its opportunities for effective social demagogy.

Now, how has it been possible for this feeble fascist system to hold its own so long in spite of the fact that it enjoys the support of only a minority of the population, that it faces the solid opposition of the working class, and that it has National-Socialism operating as a hostile force in its rear? I believe that with regard to this the following have been the decisive contributing factors:

1. Austrian fascism has dexterously managed to make capital out of the imperialist contradictions in Central Europe, not only by relying

for support on Italian bayonets, but also by securing the support of France and England and the benevolent tolerance of the Little Entente.

2. The anti-fascist front in Austria is still but insufficiently developed and has not as yet drawn in the labouring peasantry and the middle classes; nor has the split in the working class been healed as yet.

3. No success has so far been achieved in the matter of launching and organizing on a wide scale the struggles of the workers against the economic offensive of fascism.

4. The proletarian united front has not as yet become a power that can attract the discontented masses of the lower middle classes and of the labouring peasantry.

What has been the process of development within the Austrian working class since the February battles, and what has been the role of the Communist Party in this development?

Reformism in Austria was dealt a severe blow in February. Today it has no solid organizations under its control. Its ideology of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie is being rejected by the masses of the workers. Still, it would be wrong to believe that reformism no longer has any influence in Austria. The traditions of the old Social-Democratic Party, personal ties, and the like, still exert an influence in the masses. Primarily it is the urge for legal activity that is responsible for the fact that even today workers place hopes in reformism; while the latter, in its turn, tries to raise illusions about a peaceful collapse of the dictatorship and about a possibility of coming to terms with the bourgeoisie.

Large sections of the former Social-Democratic workers, particularly those of the older generation, have now assumed an attitude of watchful waiting with regard to the further course of events. A smaller part of the workers have joined the organization of the "Revolutionary Socialists" which arose from the old Social-Democratic Party.

The "Revolutionary Socialists" are in favour of the united front and acknowledge the dictatorship of the proletariat. They reject the efforts of the reformists to come to an understanding with the fascists, but have not yet broken with the Second International. They are weak organizationally; still, their ideological influence extends far beyond the bounds of their organization.

The National-Socialists have also made great efforts to gain influence over the workers. Immediately after the February events they succeeded in confusing sections of the workers; but since the July

coup their influence has been waning. In spite of this, National-Socialism still represents a serious danger in Austria.

Comrades, what experience has our Party gained in the struggle to bring about a proletarian united front and to win the Social-Democratic workers?

Our Party has unquestionably achieved considerable success along these lines. From a small Party, it has grown into a big party *enjoying mass influence*. Thanks to our united front policy, it has been possible to build up again the most important mass organizations, the Schutzbund and the Free Trade Unions—this time on the basis of the revolutionary class struggle. We have succeeded in establishing trade union unity.

The decisive political result of the proletarian united front in Austria is the fact that the united front has made it impossible for fascism to gain a mass basis in the working class and thus to consolidate its dictatorship.

The experience of the February battles created the prerequisites for the widest realization of the united front with the Social-Democratic workers, and for the growth of our Party. The Austrian Social-Democratic Party had for a long time been able, with more success than other parties, to raise the illusion that there was another way to avert fascism and realize socialism, different from the one indicated by the Communist Party. The experiences which the workers themselves gained during the February events marked the beginning of the great turn toward Communism. But this turn did not take place of itself, without the Party doing anything about it. On the contrary, the development quite definitely depended on the Party, on its policy, its tactics and its practical work.

The Party would not have been able to rally large sections of Social-Democratic workers around its banner after the February events had the Communists not been active in the fighting front against fascism even before the February events, and—above all—had they not fought shoulder to shoulder with the members of the Schutzbund in the momentous February battles. The Communists showed the way of victorious struggle, and after the experiences of February the large masses of the Social-Democratic workers recognized that this was the correct way. Wherever the Communists followed the road of sectarian isolation during the February events—and there were a few such cases—it took a long time afterwards to dispel the distrust of the workers to our Party.

After the February events the Communist Party became the sole

consistent defender of the working-class organizations, the Free Trade Unions and the Schutzbund. The sense of power of the Austrian working class was derived primarily from the strength of its organizations. Prior to the February events the Communists had been expelled from these organizations whenever they dared to criticize their leaders. When the majority of the Social-Democratic leaders left these organizations in the lurch, it was the Communist Party that took over the initiative for their defence. In this it was supported by the will and initiative of the lower and medial functionaries and large sections of the membership, who did not want to allow their organizations to be smashed. A serious obstacle that had to be overcome at that time was the sectarian tendencies in our own ranks.

There was also a tendency to refrain from restoring the old Free Trade Unions, and to form instead new trade unions with high-sounding revolutionary names. After the February events the "Revolutionary Socialists" declared that the Free Trade Unions could be restored only after the overthrow of fascism.

These liquidationist tendencies had to be overcome, and as a result we lost considerable time. As against the attempts of the government to win the workers for the fascist organizations, our Party supported the slogan advanced by the masses themselves of boycotting these organizations. The Party took the lead in the boycott movement. Later, however, when despite the boycott the fascists and the bosses had succeeded in pressing large sections of the workers in the factories into the so-called "Unity Trade Unions," we began to work in the fascist organizations. The work which the Communists, acting in a united front with the Social-Democratic workers, carried on for the defence and restoration of the working-class organizations, and in the sphere of organizing resistance to the fascist organizations, hindered the fascists in their efforts to utilize the organizational traditions of the labour movement for their own ends. This resistance which the Party organized, its fight for the defence of the working-class organizations, was the decisive factor that won the Party the confidence of large sections of Social-Democratic workers; for the reformist argument about the Communists being splitters of the labour movement was thereby refuted once and for all.

More than that—the Communist Party became the standard-bearer of proletarian unity. After the February events it embodied the will of the workers to prevent all dispersion, to heal the split and to re-establish the unity of the labour movement on a higher level and on a revolutionary basis. At the same time the Party took into consider-

ation the sentiments of the Social-Democratic workers, who for many years had been firmly convinced of the correctness of the policy of their party, of the correctness of the road they had followed in the past, and who now experienced great disillusionment. These workers had fought as Social-Democrats, although unconsciously they had ceased to be Social-Democrats long ago. While making no concessions with regard to our criticism of the policies of the Social-Democratic Party, we established in the minds of the Social-Democratic workers and functionaries the consciousness of a certain continuity between their past and their joining the Communist Party. We linked up our work with the best fighting and organizational traditions of the Austrian labour movement, and developed in the workers the consciousness that these fighting traditions found their continuation in the Communist Party. Thus we succeeded in stimulating the initiative of many hundreds of former Social-Democratic workers and of whole groups and in enlisting them—although they were not Communists as yet—in the struggle for maintaining the working-class organizations, in the struggle against fascism. In that period we also learned to speak to the Social-Democratic workers in their simple workers' language, and thus made it easier for them to find their way into the ranks of the Communist Party.

Comrade Dimitrov has spoken in his report of the non-Party Bolsheviks. Comrades, there is a considerable number of such Bolsheviks in Austria today. They have contributed a great deal to the successes achieved by the Party in the establishment of the united front. Such are, in the first place, the Schutzbund members who gained in the February battles the conviction that in order to accomplish their aims they must enter upon the Bolshevik road. (*Applause.*)

The question of trade union unity was a particularly important factor for the development of the united front in Austria. Our experience shows that the question of trade union unity cannot be separated from the general question of the united front policy. For a long time all our repeated proposals for establishing unity were in vain. When, however, the united front of the Communist Party, the "Revolutionary Socialists," and the Schutzbund was able to organize demonstrations and short strikes in many Vienna factories on the anniversary of the February events, that had a decisive effect on the further development of trade union unity as well.

One of the most serious weaknesses of our Party and of the united front today consists in the fact that we have so far not been able to make much progress in organizing the struggle of the workers

in the factories for their immediate demands, against the attacks of fascism. That is why we consider it now to be our most important task to convert the Free Trade Unions into real centres for the struggle of the workers in the factories for their every-day interests.

However, the realization of the unity of the Free Trade Unions forcefully urges upon the Party the necessity of dealing with another problem—the problem of work in the fascist “Unity Trade Unions.” The “Unity Trade Unions” represent a weak spot in the so-called labour policy of Austrian fascism. Still, the fascists claim that they have succeeded in getting 250,000 workers to join these trade unions. This does not mean, however, that they have succeeded in winning over these workers ideologically as well. It is clear that we must work in these trade unions and that we can achieve success in this work.

In this connection the following question presents itself: Should we content ourselves with only utilizing these trade unions, so as to break them up and destroy them in the end? I believe that we may make a step further, and raise in these organizations not only the demand for the election of functionaries, but also—under proper circumstances—the demand for ridding these “Unity Trade Unions” of their subjugation to and dependence on the government and the manufacturers. I believe that in the concrete conditions obtaining in Austria such a possibility exists. We must make these organizations useless to the fascists; and if we do our work properly we may even bring matters to such a head that the lower organizations of the “Unity Trade Unions” will be transformed into an instrument in the hands of the workers against fascism.

The most important and decisive question of the united front in Austria is that of our relations with the “Revolutionary Socialists.” Owing to the specific conditions created after the February events, the question of united action became most closely linked up with the question of organizational unity as a foregone conclusion. The “Revolutionary Socialists” agree to the necessity of the united front; but in practice, in the process of carrying out the united front, their leadership—under the influence of partly reformist and partly Trotskyite elements—evinces certain vacillations.

Up to February 1935 the tendencies among a section of the “Revolutionary Socialists” to oppose the united front were largely held in check. This has changed after February 1935, when the leadership of the “Revolutionary Socialists” launched a campaign against the united Schutzbund, against the Communist International and against

the Soviet Union. By this turn-about the "Revolutionary Socialists" brought harm not only to the movement as a whole, but also to themselves.

We do not know all the reasons that impelled them to take the attitude they did. But we believe that the following reasons weighed most with them: They were afraid that we were using the united front only as a pretext; that our aim was to take away their members and that we wanted to swallow them up.

They could see for themselves that we had no such intentions.

The last Plenum of our Central Committee justly pointed out that it was precisely during the period when the "Revolutionary Socialists" were strengthening their united front with us that they scored their greatest successes, and that after they had loosened the united front with us they began to suffer reverses. We are not interested in taking away members from the "Revolutionary Socialists"—what we are interested in is enhancing the fighting strength of the proletariat by means of the united front, and preparing for organizational unity.

Today we are in a position to say: The united front in Austria is unshakable. The overwhelming majority of members and functionaries of the "Revolutionary Socialists" also support the united front. The will of the masses for unity will sweep aside everyone who dares seriously to infringe the united front.

But we consider the united front in its present form only a stage on the road toward organizational unity. We lay all stress on the words of Comrade Dimitrov that our struggle against our class enemy requires single political leadership—a single revolutionary party. The political situation in Austria requires the amalgamation of the "Revolutionary Socialists" and the Communist Party, and the political conditions obtaining in Austria favour this amalgamation.

About a year ago Otto Bauer put forward the slogan for unity: "For a new Hainfeld!" At that time he still had visions of a revival of the old Social-Democratic Party. He toyed with the slogan of organizational unity and was convinced that the Communists would reject it. He hoped that he would thus succeed in splitting away from the Communist Party the former Social-Democrats who had joined it after the February battles.

What was our Party's answer to this?

At a conference of Socialists, with Otto Bauer attending, which discussed Otto Bauer's slogan, "For a new Hainfeld!", a Communist declared on behalf of the Party: "We are ready to unite with the

'Revolutionary Socialists' in a single revolutionary party on the basis of the fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism." Since then Otto Bauer and the "Revolutionary Socialists" have stopped talking about a "new Hainfeld." They have shelved this slogan.

We are for organizational unity on the basis of Marxism—Leninism. Comrade Dimitrov has said in his report what the conditions for such unity are. What doubts and what objections can the "Revolutionary Socialists" raise against these conditions? They profess the irreconcilable class struggle, they profess the dictatorship of the proletariat, they profess revolutionary Marxism. Why are they opposed to amalgamation into a single revolutionary mass party, when the desire of the Austrian workers for unity is stronger than ever before?

The "Revolutionary Socialists" are afraid of severing their contacts with the old Social-Democratic functionaries whose mentality still remains partly reformist. In my opinion, a united revolutionary party would attract all former Social-Democrats who are connected with the workers and who are able and willing to learn from experience. Only those who are not prepared to give up every thought of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie would shun the road of unity. But neither can the "Revolutionary Socialists" attach any importance to the question of drawing these elements into a revolutionary mass party.

The "Revolutionary Socialists" declare that amalgamation with the Communists would sever their ties with the workers of the West. Is this true, comrades? No, it is not true. Historical development refutes this argument. When the "Revolutionary Socialists" speak of the workers in the West, they have in mind primarily the workers of France and Great Britain. Would unity in Austria repel the French workers? On the contrary, we are convinced that the French workers, both Communists and Socialists, would hail with joy the amalgamation of the Communists and the "Revolutionary Socialists" in Austria. They, too, are striving for unity, and they would see in the unity of the Austrian workers an example for themselves. And the British workers? Is it true that the British workers would fail to appreciate unity in Austria? This is not true either. Of course, there are still many reformist illusions alive in the British working class; but neither are the British workers entirely impervious to the process of the revolutionization of the world proletariat, and to a certain extent it is also up to the "Revolutionary Socialists" in Austria to accelerate this process of revolutionization. But—more than that—even the workers who today still think along reformist lines would understand and approve of the fact that under the pressure of fascism the

Austrian working class was shaping a powerful instrument for its class struggle in the form of a united revolutionary mass party.

But when the "Revolutionary Socialists" speak of the workers in the West, it is really the Second International that they have in mind. To be sure, they do not avow their adherence to the Second International with pride and joy, as we avow our adherence to the Third International. They declare that they are affiliated to the Second International only for reasons of expediency. But what does this International represent? It is a loose, disintegrating conglomeration of different parties, embodying no united will. The contrast between the two conceptions of the road to be travelled by the working class is becoming ever more pronounced in the Second International. The Third International, relying on the Soviet Union, is becoming to an increasing extent the centre for rallying all the anti-fascist forces, the organizer of the mass struggle against fascism and imperialist war. The Second International is manifesting ever more clearly its impotence, its inability to show a road and give an aim to the workers, to the masses of the people. Under these circumstances, what expediency can there be in affiliating with this International for the sake of an organizational fiction? The "Revolutionary Socialists" are delaying the necessary process of clarification. They will render the international labour movement a great service if they accelerate this process and effect their amalgamation with us.

There is still another objection raised by the "Revolutionary Socialists" against amalgamation. Some of their functionaries assert that the Parties of the Third International take orders from the Soviet Union, that they submit to the dictates of its foreign policy. The proceedings at this Congress are a sufficient refutation of this argument.

Is it still necessary to point out today that the interests of the great worker and peasant state are identical with the interests of the international working class, and that the peace policy of the Soviet Union is the most powerful lever for the revolutionary struggle of the proletarians in all countries? I believe, comrades, that after the report of Comrade Dimitrov and after the declarations of our world Congress, this objection does not hold water.

We hope that the road which our world Congress shows the workers will be followed by the "Revolutionary Socialists" of Austria as well. But a great deal will depend on how soon and how consistently they take this road. Our Party will do everything to convince them that for them, too, there can be no other way out but

the road of unity under the banner of the Communist International. For our part, we shall do everything to make this road easier for them. (*Applause.*)

Comrades, one of the main weaknesses of our Party consists in the fact that we have not been able to extend our activity beyond the bounds of the proletarian united front so as to draw the discontented lower middle classes and the labouring peasants as well into the fighting front against fascism. We hail the successes of our French Party, whose People's Front policy serves as an example for all our Parties. In our opinion, the experience of our French comrades must be turned to good account also in the countries under a fascist dictatorship. But I see a definite danger spot in the possibility of many of our comrades entertaining the belief that all we now need is simply to proclaim the People's Front with all its perspectives, and the key to success will then be in our hands. We must clearly realize that the policy which Comrade Dimitrov has expounded in his report will involve a serious turn in our entire mass work.

We must not forget that it was only under the strong pressure of the proletarian united front that the People's Front was brought about in France. This shows us above all what a great power of attraction the proletarian united front can have for the middle classes and also for the labouring peasants. It was precisely this that refuted the argument of the reformists who asserted that a united front with the Communists would repel the petty-bourgeois and middle classes. Nor must we forget that the People's Front in France has been achieved for the very reason that the proletarian united front has come to represent also the direct interests of the peasants and the urban middle classes, and that, as Comrade Thorez has aptly put it here, the French Communists have become the attorneys for the defence of the direct interests of all sections of the working people.

I believe that it is this idea that we must take as our guiding line in our work for the organization of a broad anti-fascist People's Front extending beyond the bounds of the proletarian united front.

We must concern ourselves, in the first place, with the direct interests of the labouring peasants. What is the position with regard to these interests in Austria? Large masses of the peasantry and of the urban middle classes are today profoundly disillusioned with the so-called "state of the estates of the realm." They are opposed and hostile to the ruling system. And it is precisely into these sections of the population that the Nazis insinuate themselves by utilizing their desire for a radical change, their craving for freedom.

We must frankly admit that for a long time we underestimated the significance of the Nazi movement in Austria and that we neglected to oppose the demagoguery of the Nazis and to undertake the fight for the masses of the peasants and the middle classes.

So far we have not tackled the peasant question systematically and with the necessary energy. We can win the confidence of the peasants and wrest them from the influence of the Nazis only if we support the peasants in their elementary demands and place ourselves at the head of their struggle. That is why we must extend our activity to all organizations where the peasants and urban middle classes are to be found at present, and come forward in all these organizations as the champions of the will of the working people for freedom and peace.

What kind of front do the working people of Austria need? What kind of People's Front is it the task of the Communist Party to organize?

The fight of the working people of Austria is above all a fight for freedom. It is at the same time a fight for peace, which is threatened by fascism. Who constitutes the greatest menace to the peace in Austria? Hitler fascism, which is out to seize Austria. But Austrian fascism, which oppresses the working people and thereby suppresses the only forces that are able to protect Austria's peace from the predatory designs of the German warmongers, also constitutes a threat to peace.

For quite some time Otto Bauer nurtured among the Austrian workers the illusion that it was possible to conclude an alliance with the former advocates of a Greater Germany and a National Union, who have today for the most part turned Nazi, and thus to overthrow the government. He has now changed his opinion, because he has begun to see for himself that such illusions are nothing but grist to the mill of the Nazis.

The proletarian united front in Austria must make it its task to take the initiative in the struggle of the working people for their rights and liberties and against the Heimwehr fascists and the Hapsburg danger; it must make it its task thereby to win over the working people who are today leaning to National-Socialism, and to frustrate the demagogic attempts of the Nazis to pass for champions of the liberties of the people as against Austrian fascism.

We believe that the proletarian united front furnishes a basis for building up a broad popular movement in Austria for the restoration of the rights and liberties of the working people, for peace, and for the independence of the Austrian nation. But so far only the rudiments

of such a movement exist, and they have not as yet assumed definite shape.

As the first and most important prerequisite and the basis for uniting the broad masses of the people against war and fascism, we must consolidate the proletarian united front and use the Free Trade Unions to activize the former Social-Democratic workers who are still standing aloof from the movement. As another prerequisite, we must at the same time penetrate into the fascist trade unions and into all the Christian worker and peasant organizations. The Peasants' League is today vehemently opposed to the totalitarian aspirations of the Heimwehr and to the penetration of the Nazis. In this opposition the Christian peasant leaders often resort to democratic phraseology. It is this that we must make use of by carrying on good mass work in the Peasants' League and in other Christian organizations. We must work to intensify their opposition to the Heimwehr and to the Nazis so as to turn it into a struggle against fascism. Only by carrying on good mass work of this character in these organizations can we create the prerequisites for the common struggle of large sections of the people both against Heimwehr fascism and against Hitler fascism.

Under these circumstances the People's Front in Austria becomes a front of liberty and peace and the defender of Austria's independence against Hitler fascism and its pacemakers in the camp of Austrian fascism. The peculiar feature of a People's Front policy in Austria is the establishment of a peace front on a broad basis.

The People's Front would unite all the forces fighting for the restoration of the democratic rights and liberties of the people; it would at the same time defend peace, thereby defending Austria's independence against the designs of Hitler fascism.

The situation in Austria may change very rapidly. Our Party may very soon be confronted with great events; it may presently face situations requiring a resolute stand and determined action. With this idea in mind we must render our Party capable of assuming its heightened historic responsibilities and of doing justice to its larger tasks. Our Party has grown. But at the same time we must state that the ideological growth of the Party has not kept pace with the growth of its political influence. This may give rise to serious danger. We shall do everything to train every Party member to combine the greatest firmness of principle with flexibility of tactics, the greatest clarity of political views with the greatest initiative in political action. Comrade Stalin's maxim that "cadres decide everything" applies to the capitalist countries as well.

Our cadres display the greatest devotion and self-sacrifice in their work. But in view of the complicated situation in Austria they must, more than ever before, become permeated with the living knowledge of Bolshevism and with its political certitude of purpose. Our Party must lose no time in enlisting and training new forces, so as to enable it to penetrate wherever the masses are to be found and to gain leadership in all mass organizations.

Since the events of February 1934 our Party has assumed responsibility for the destinies of the Austrian working class. The consciousness of this responsibility has been the reason for its successes. But we do not rest content with these successes. We measure our successes by our tasks, and we must say that even now not everything is as it should be. We suffer from serious weak spots, and we must do everything to get rid of them quickly. We shall do everything, not only to achieve new gains, but also to attain victory. (*Stormy applause.*)

KOLAROV (*greeted with loud applause*): A particularly glaring manifestation of the tottering of the foundations of bourgeois society is the impoverishment and ruin of millions of small peasant producers and their rising indignation against the ruling classes, which are trying to shift all the burdens of the industrial and agrarian crisis on to the shoulders of the working people.

In every country the crisis has intensified all the forms of exploitation, spoliation and oppression of the peasants, and has thereby set in motion the vast masses of the peasant reserves of the proletarian revolution.

In many countries, in which the survivals of feudalism are still alive, the peasants are directly interested in the overthrow of the power of the landlords. In those countries in which the bourgeois revolution released the peasants from feudal dependence, new exploiter classes have taken the place of the old, and the peasantry has fallen into the clutches of the banks, trusts and cartels. The peasantry fights against these with no less determination than formerly against the feudal lords, and thereby it objectively supports the fight of the proletariat against capitalism.

In the bourgeois-democratic revolutions of the past the peasants were the allies and reserves of the bourgeoisie. The experience of the peasant movement in recent years has sharply posed before the Communist Parties the extremely important task of fighting for the impoverished and starving, discontented and protesting, rebellious and mutinying peasantry and of transforming it into an active ally of the proletariat. The accomplishment of this task will determine to a great extent

the success of the struggle against fascism, against capitalism, the acceleration of the proletarian revolution.

It is true that our Sections have rid themselves of the scornful and semi-hostile attitude to the peasant question which they inherited from the era of the Second International in the sphere of theory; and it is also true that they have tackled the practical work of mobilizing the peasants, have drawn up programs of action for the countryside and issued slogans for the peasants. However, they did all this after a great deal of delay. Mass work among the peasants still remains the weakest spot in the work of even the most advanced Sections of the Communist International.

Despite the fact that fascism is the tool of the worst exploiters and despoilers of the labour of the peasants, it rose to political power in a number of countries largely on the wave of the indignation of the peasants and their rebellion against the ruling classes, which condemn the peasantry to ruin and starvation. I am convinced that if the Communists had done better Bolshevik work in the countryside it would have been quite possible to prevent the penetration of fascism into the peasantry and thereby to hamper considerably the accession of fascism to power.

Comrades, no matter how the demagogy of the fascists may have blinded and ensnared the peasants, it would not have been able to win the peasants over to the side of the magnates of capital and of the landlords if it had not been for Social-Democracy, with its policy of collaboration with the bourgeoisie, its policy of undermining the collaboration of the proletariat with the peasantry, and its policy of splitting the proletariat, which weakened the latter and paved the way for fascism.

It is the enormous fault of Social-Democracy that in a number of countries the peasants have fallen prey to the fascist demagogues.

The effect of the Social-Democratic splitting policy was all the more ruinous because the fascists did everything to inculcate in the peasantry the belief that their accession to power was inevitable. The delusion of the certainty and inevitability of the fascists' accession to power was one of the most effective methods used by the fascists in influencing the peasants, who constantly heard nothing but: They are coming into power—if not today, then tomorrow; they will keep their promises, they will help their friends, and let their enemies fear their wrath.

The successes of fascism in the countryside, which, as we have seen from the example of Germany, constitute a stage on the road to the

suppression of the proletariat, must prompt the Communists to intensify their mass work in the countryside.

The labouring peasants of the capitalist countries see before them two examples: on the one hand, the real revolution of the workers and peasants under the leadership of the proletariat in Russia—a revolution which transferred the entire land free of charge to the peasants and relieved them from rent bondage and every other oppression, which opened to the peasantry the way to prosperity and to a life of freedom and culture, and, on the other hand, the lying, fraudulent so-called “revolution” of the fascists in Germany, which delivered the labouring peasantry over entirely into the hands of the landlords and capitalists, robbed it of all democratic liberties, and condemned it to ruin, want and starvation, to physical degeneration and to savagery. In contradistinction to the ignominious bankruptcy of the fascist “deliverance” of the peasantry in Germany, we point to the magnificent victory of the collective farm system in the Soviet Union. We must make thorough use of the revolutionizing influence of the victory of the workers and peasants in the Soviet Union on all fronts of Socialist construction. We must use the example of the Soviet Union to tear the mask from the false face of fascist “socialism,” so called.

But the exposure of the fascist deception is not all. The proletariat will win over the peasants only when it renders the fighting peasantry real assistance.

The Communists must put an end to all sectarian vacillations and reservations in their ranks on the question of the struggle of the peasantry for its interests.

In a spirit of self-criticism, we must all admit openly that the survivals of sectarianism in the Communist Parties prevented them from realizing in time what pinched the peasants most, and from drawing closer to the labouring peasantry in its struggle for its most burning daily needs. To this day these sectarian survivals prevent many of our Parties from doing genuine Bolshevik mass work in the countryside.

Not everywhere and not always have the Communists as yet fully realized that the struggle of the peasants against the trusts and profiteers who buy up the products of the heavy toil of the peasants for next to nothing and then sell them at high monopoly prices on the domestic market—that the sharp edge of this struggle is directed against monopoly capital, against the worst enemy of the proletariat, against the originators and organizers of the terrorist fascist dictatorship. Not everywhere and not always have the Communists fully

realized that they must do everything to help this struggle and take the initiative in organizing and leading it.

The partial demands of the peasantry have been a stumbling block in the mass work of the Communists among the peasants and in the struggle against fascism in the countryside. Sectarianism has been responsible for the fact that the Communists have frequently failed to take note of the peasant movement, that they have treated it with disdain and thus allowed the peasants to fall prey to fascist demagoguery. They have failed to grasp the fact that the struggle of the peasants even for moderate demands acquires revolutionary importance if carried on under Bolshevik leadership.

In the meantime the work of enlisting the peasants in the anti-fascist People's Front, which is of such tremendous and decisive importance, is lagging behind precisely as a result of the wrong attitude to the partial demands of the peasants. This is a sore spot even in the splendid work carried on by the French Communists for the establishment of a powerful People's Front against fascism and war. The united front against fascism can be established in the countryside only on the basis of the formulation and defence of the elementary and most urgent economic and political demands of the peasants. This refers to demands, the struggle for which can unite the vast majority of the exploited, oppressed and distressed mass of the rural population. While not renouncing the popularization of the collectivization of agriculture, of Soviet power and similar slogans, the Communists, if they are not to become isolated from the masses, must refrain from putting them forward as slogans of the struggle against fascism.

In the struggle against fascism in the countryside we must have clarity on the question of who are the protagonists of fascism among the peasants.

Unfortunately, there is a great deal of exceedingly harmful confusion with regard to this question. For a long time the Communist Parties in a number of countries considered the existing peasant mass organizations as fascist or pro-fascist organizations, declared that they constituted the social prop of fascism in the countryside, and drew from this all the corresponding political and tactical conclusions.

However, such peasants mass organizations as the People's Party in Poland, the Agrarian Party in Czechoslovakia, the Zaranist Party in Rumania, Radich's Peasant Party, the Peasant League in Bulgaria, etc., cannot be characterized as fascist. Historically, many of these organizations arose in the protracted struggle of the peasantry

against the landed proprietors and against national oppression. Many of them have revolutionary traditions, and all of them are closely linked with the largest sections of the rural population. Despite the fact that their rich-peasant leaders are in the service of the banks and trusts and act as agents of fascism, these organizations, owing to their social composition, cannot fully serve the interests of monopoly capital. They are likewise of little use as instruments of the terror against the masses of the peasants.

In so far as the peasant organizations are deeply rooted among the masses, it is inconceivable that we can carry on a serious struggle against fascism or do intensive work to win over the peasants unless we have a correct approach to these organizations.

If we want to wage a successful struggle against fascism, we must take the peasantry as it is—with its organizations and with the leaders who still enjoy the confidence of the peasants. The struggle against fascism and war in the countryside requires that the Communists definitely abandon the practice of identifying all non-Communist parties and organizations with fascism. It requires that the Communists work indefatigably for the conclusion of agreements with all peasant mass parties, organizations and leagues in the countryside for the establishment of an anti-fascist People's Front on a platform of struggle for the most urgent economic and political demands which the peasants themselves put forward. (*Applause.*)

RAYMOND GUYOT: It is a cruel fact that in the countries under fascist dictatorship, primarily in Germany, the fascists have succeeded in winning considerable masses of the youth for their counter-revolutionary work.

It is likewise a known fact that on February 6, 1934, the fascist leagues in our country had a certain section of the youth—primarily students, sons of merchants, office employees, and young unemployed—behind them. Despite our great successes, the fascist leagues still enjoy considerable influence among the youth. The organization of the National Volunteers (*Volontaires Nationaux*) alone, which operates under the direction of the “*Croix de Feu*” (“*Fiery Cross*”), has a membership of 40,000.

How has it come about that the youth has allowed itself to be led astray by its enemies, by those who condemn young people to forced labour, who drive the masses of them out of industry, who force them under the heel of militarism, who destroy culture, deliver

young girls into slavery, and keep the free spirits in concentration camps?

The young generation is condemned to beggary, ignorance, and physical degeneration. It no longer sees a basis for itself in the present, and it looks with terror into the future.

The fascists take advantage of the inexperience of youth, and by means of crafty demagogy exploit the demoralization of the young generation, which has been very aptly expressed by a young unemployed who said: "We want to fight anywhere, for anything."

The fascists try to pose as champions of the youth by parading in an "anti-capitalist," patriotic and republican guise.

In order to defeat fascism, we have combined our ideological struggle with the practical struggle for the economic, political and cultural interests of the youth. This is the first source of our success.

In order to defeat fascism, we have stressed the tactic of the united front, as well as of the front of the young generation, which cooperates with the People's Front. This is the second source of our success.

In order to defeat fascism, we have fought against the sectarian tendencies to engage in individual struggles; we have applied the principle of the self-defence of the masses, and have worked to win the young workers who had strayed into the ranks of the fascist leagues. This is the third reason for our success.

Comrades, it is obvious that the demagogy of the fascist leagues cannot stand the test of reality, that the facts of reality are definitely against them.

What is the value of the "love for France" of a Colonel Count de la Rocque, whose forebears were officers of the Coblenz émigrés, who, together with the feudal lords of Central Europe, hatched plots against France? What is the value of his love for the Republic—the love of a man whose brother is the adjutant of the pretender to the throne of France? What is the value of his love for the French people—the love of a man whose friends Scapini, Jean Goy and Monnier went to Berlin, where they came to terms with Hitler about the destruction of France and the Soviet Union? We have pilloried these men and have shown the youth of our country that only we really love our country and that only we strive to free it from those who want to wreck it and plunge it into the abyss. We have shown that we alone today continue the glorious traditions of the Great French Revolution when we carry on a real fight against the financial oligarchy.

We have countered the "anti-capitalist" demagoguery of the fascists in a similar way.

What is the value of the anti-capitalism of a Colonel Count de la Rocque, who has sold himself to Mercier of the Electricity Trust and to de Wendel, king of heavy industry? Both of these exploiters personally belong to the "Croix de Feu."

When these facts were exposed and made widely known in a paper published by our Party, this was a severe blow to the fascists. Many young people in the organization of the National Volunteers have since then become concerned with the problem of ridding themselves of "the guardianship of the Merciers and de Wendels."

It is in this connection that the "Declaration of the Rights of the Young Generation" assumes historic and international importance. This Declaration, which is written in a popular style that makes it accessible even to the politically most backward young people, was widely distributed last fall by the Youth Committee against War and Fascism.

The program was drawn up fully in accord with the ideas and sentiments of the youth of our country, and gave expression to the most urgent and popular wishes of the young workers, young peasants, students, soldiers, girls and boys.

Today the fight is going on for the realization of the rights proclaimed in the Declaration. The Central Committee of our League has mobilized all its forces, and is waging the struggle for the proclaimed rights of the youth. We have about six hundred Youth Unity Committees in France. Thirty-two national youth organizations which participated in the demonstration of July 14, including the Young Socialist League, the Free Religious (secular), the Republican and the Radical-Socialist youth organizations, have recently adopted the Declaration of Rights of the Young Generation as the basis of their future activities.

We have been confronted with certain difficulties, which have hindered our advancing more rapidly—as rapidly as possible, so as to completely rout fascism from the ranks of the youth.

The causes of these difficulties lie in manifestations of sectarianism, and they have originated for the most part in the ranks of the Young Socialist League.

In the first place, the very necessity of the People's Front is disputed in the ranks of the Socialist youth.

The leaders of the Socialist youth have further refused to cooperate

with us in the necessary work of winning over the hundreds of thousands of young people who belong to the Christian organizations.

The leaders of the Socialist youth maintain that the "Christian Youth" organizations are reactionary and fascist. Unquestionably, there are people at the head of the Catholic Church who are working for fascism, and against whom we are carrying on a ruthless fight. But we must not identify the hundreds of thousands of young workers and peasants who belong to the Christian organizations with their reactionary and fascist leaders. They, the young workers and peasants, are no fascists. On many occasions they have even manifested anti-fascist leanings.

Although there is an agreement between the Socialist and Communist Youth Leagues to carry on a joint struggle for the defence of the economic interests of the youth, many comrades of the Seine Federation of the Young Socialist League, who have lent an ear to the counsels of the counter-revolutionary Trotskyites, have opposed every action for the immediate and partial demands of the youth. These comrades maintain that the struggle for these demands is a past stage, and they further add that under the present regime it is impossible to achieve the fulfilment of these demands. On the face of it these assertions seem radical. But what is concealed behind them? The "Left" phrases are used to conceal a most dangerous attitude of passivity. Their effect is to renounce the mobilization of the large masses of the youth for the struggle against capital, to renounce the education of the youth in the spirit of the class struggle.

If we want to follow the line laid down by Comrade Dimitrov, we must everywhere form unity committees to direct the joint activity of the two organizations systematically, and not only as occasion may happen to require.

We accept in full earnest the recent decision of the international conference at Toulouse, which was attended by delegates of the Young Socialist Leagues of France, Belgium, Spain, Italy, Switzerland and Austria. This conference adopted a resolution in which we read:

"We are in favour of unity of the revolutionary forces. We demand that unity of action be established as a first step toward organizational unity."

The entire Young Communist International, as well as all Young Socialists throughout the world, hope that the next congress of the Young Socialist International will indorse this decision. (*Applause.*)

In the Soviet Union, where the Bolshevik Party of Lenin and

Stalin, who is the best friend of the world youth, has liberated the people from the exploitation of man by man, the youth is the happiest in the world.

There the young people work freely and get an education. There they are in a position to enjoy a happy family life. There the young people are strong mentally and physically. What a wonderful hope their example holds out for us!

The fascist parties and leagues which represent themselves as youth parties are young only as regards their time of birth. They represent the class that is approaching its doom in crisis and blood. They are old parties in the service of the financial oligarchy, which does not want to relinquish its domination over the world. They are the enemies of the youth; wherever they are the masters they destroy, break up and enslave the youth.

The swelling wave of activity among the youth, which is realizing its unity and fights shoulder to shoulder with the proletariat, heralds an early victory for us. The glorious heroes of China, Austria and Spain show us how we must fight. Our heroic comrades in Germany, to whom I convey heartfelt greetings in the name of the French youth, show us that the revolutionary youth will never bow its head.

We have repulsed the fascists. But they still represent a serious danger. Their forces in the ranks of the youth are still strong. We shall finally drive them out of the ranks of the youth if we carry out our policy of united action and of rallying the non-fascist organizations—in the first place the Christian youth organizations and the sports and cultural organizations—in *one* front. On the other hand, our ideological struggle against the fascists is still weak, and it still happens often that sectarian tendencies prevail against our policy of work among the masses.

We are still behind in our struggle for the fulfilment of the demands of the youth and of the soldiers.

In the course of the past eighteen months we have gained 15,000 new members. But we are still a small organization, and the number of our members amounts to only a fourth of the membership of our Party. One of our most important tasks is to recruit tens of thousands of new members; for it is the Communist youth that will decide the success of the fight that has begun. With the cooperation and assistance of the Central Committee of our Party we shall solve the problem of the Communist education of the entire young generation, and shall render our position as vanguard of the youth still more powerful. (*Prolonged applause.*)

VARGA: Comrades, in his report, Comrade Dimitrov has clearly and exhaustively developed the problems of our strategy and tactics.

In the years of the crisis and of the depression of a special kind, talk of planning capitalist economy has become quite a vogue.

What have been the reasons for the boom in planned-economy schemes and manœuvres of the apologists of the bourgeoisie and of reformism in recent years? The main reasons have been the following:

1. The impossibility of solving the problem of markets;
2. The necessity of screening the plundering of the state treasury by the financial oligarchy;
3. The necessity of screening the readjustment of economic life on a war footing;
4. The desire to retard the process of revolutionization among the workers.

In the period of the general crisis of capitalism the contradiction between the productive forces and the production relations are glaringly manifested in the *chronic contraction of the capitalist market*. The inherent laws of capitalism inevitably lead to the market problems becoming increasingly *insuperable*. The periods of prosperity, when marketing proceeds at an even pace, are becoming ever shorter; while the periods of crisis and depression, the periods of marketing difficulties, are becoming ever longer. In the present period of the general crisis of capitalism there is the tendency toward chronic marketing difficulties which assume catastrophic proportions during the periods of industrial crisis.

The bourgeoisie and its scientists would like to outwit history by introducing capitalist planned economy.

The purpose of capitalist planned economy would be primarily to solve the market problem.

But, how can planned economy harmonize production with the market?

Either by reducing production, or by increasing consumption.

As a matter of fact, under capitalism the only means of solving the problem of overproduction is to *reduce production*. This has actually been blurted out by some bourgeois economists.

However, at a time when millions upon millions of workers have been jobless for years, when—in the words of Comrade Stalin—the idea of storming the citadel of capitalism is maturing in the minds of the masses, when it is becoming ever more difficult for the reformist leaders to divert the workers from the path of revolution, it is impossible for the politicians of the bourgeoisie to come out openly with a plan

calling for the solution of the problem of markets by a systematic reduction of production, *i.e.*, by systematically swelling the ranks of unemployed. If they did that the result would be to whip up the anger of the masses rather than to assuage it. It is as the saying has it: "Things like that are done, but they are not bragged about."

That is why all the planned-economy projects definitely include extensive public works as a means of reducing unemployment and raising the purchasing power of the population. That is why the prophets of capitalist planned economy announce that the marketing problem will be solved by raising the purchasing power of the working population.

But not a single one of these plans provides an answer to the question as to how the rise in the purchasing power is to be brought about under capitalism.

We must fight this dangerous demagogy both with the theoretical arguments of Marxism and with a concrete analysis of the "planned-economy" schemes.

Theoretically: The profits of the capitalists are identical with surplus value. There are no other sources of profits except the surplus value which the workers create and the capitalists appropriate. To suggest to the bourgeoisie that it agree voluntarily to pay higher wages in order to sell more goods is tantamount to proposing that it give the workers money out of its own purse in order to enable them to buy up the surplus goods. From the point of view of the bourgeoisie that would be bad business, which it will never consent to. Here the saying quoted above may be reversed: "Things like that are bragged about, but they are not done." A capitalist never pays higher wages of his own free will: his interest is always to squeeze out of the worker the highest possible output for the lowest possible wage. Only by hard struggle can the workers obtain any improvement in their condition.

Big business does not object to the demagogy of high wages so long as it is confined to *talk*. This has been demonstrated by the fate of the New Deal in America.

De Man declares: Reform, the everyday struggle for higher wages, for a change in the distribution of incomes, has now become obsolete and useless. What is necessary, he says, is "an offensive against the very structure of capitalism": by nationalizing the key positions of capitalist economy—the big banks and the most monopolized branches of industry—a "planned economy capitalism" must be created as a transition to socialism. Nationalization must not, however, be

accomplished by expropriating the bourgeoisie, but by the state purchasing so many shares as will give it "controlling influence." And all this is to be accomplished not by revolution, but by the cooperation of all "people of good will" without distinction of class; in other words, by following in practice the road of parliamentary coalition government.

The "planned-economy" demagogy of the reformists serves primarily to allay the discontent in the ranks of the Social-Democratic workers; it serves to fight the influence of the Communist Parties, to counterbalance the revolutionizing influence of the Soviet Union.

As long as the bourgeoisie remains the ruling class and the bourgeois state apparatus is left intact, the so-called "nationalization" by the purchase of shares, the transfer of a small part of the means of production into the ownership of the bourgeois state which is controlled by big capital, constitutes not a weakening, but rather the strengthening of the domination of the bourgeoisie. Hitler Germany furnishes the best proof of this. In fascist Germany the state has a "controlling" share in all the big banks and in most of the important branches of industry. Does this mean that the position of the financial oligarchy has been weakened? Not in the least. On the contrary: the participation of the state provides the financial oligarchy the opportunity for increasing the despoliation of all the other classes. When a Social-Democratic party, *which participates in the government*, such as the Belgian or Czech Socialist Parties, engages in planned-economy manoeuvres, the reformist leaders should—as Comrade Dimitrov has already pointed out—be confronted with the demand: Show what you can do; realize your plan—the whole plan, as you have always said you would do; fulfil your promises for an improvement in the condition of the workers.

One of the mainsprings of the planned-economy demagogy is the desire to stave off the revolutionizing influence of the Soviet Union. In the years of the crisis and of the depression of a special kind the superiority of the Soviet system over the capitalist system has become so obvious and striking that it is no longer possible simply to deny its successes, as was generally the case before. Even according to bourgeois statistics, the output of industry in the Soviet Union had risen in 1934 to 296 per cent as compared with the year 1928: *in these six years it had trebled*, while the output of the capitalist world had been hurled back decades in the years of the crisis. Thus it has become necessary to devise new means for carrying on the fight against the influence of the Soviet Union. The bourgeois and Social-Democratic planned-economy protagonists now declare: The superiority of the

Soviet Union is due, not to the change of the social system, but to its *planned economy*. *The evil of capitalism lies, not in the capitalist system as such, but only in its anarchy, in its lack of plan.*

The indispensable prerequisite for a successful planned economy—the solution of the market problem by the extension of the purchasing power of the masses—is the elimination of profit as the motive power and, at the same time, the curb of production; consequently, it is the overthrow of bourgeois rule and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat. Only with the abolition of private property in the means of production—that inherent barrier to the extension of the consumption of the masses—will the market problem disappear and planned economy become possible. Herein lies the essential difference between *capitalist* economy (whether anarchic or “planned”) and the economy of the Soviet Union. Whereas in capitalist society the limited purchasing power of the masses limits the extension of the market and thereby also the growth of production, in the Soviet Union the reverse is the case. Here there are no limitations on the capacity for consumption, such as are inherent in class society. (The extension of consumption is here limited only by the condition of the rapidly developing productive forces at any given moment.) The greater the output, the more can the population consume. That is why there is no market problem, and there can never be a crisis of over-production in the Soviet Union. That is why planned economy is possible in the Soviet Union. All the other plans—from de Man’s to Lloyd George’s—provide for the restriction of the rights of parliament, for the setting up of new bodies to be composed of representatives of “business” and of the reformist trade unions, and for the grant of special powers to the government. The similarity between these plans and Mussolini’s corporate state is unmistakable.

All this goes to show that the struggle against the planned-economy demagogy is an important part of the struggle to win the masses.

Without revolutionary theory, there can be no revolutionary practice. Therefore we must not neglect the struggle against the reformists in the sphere of theory. We must not allow a de Man to defile the great names of Marx and Lenin unchallenged. It is our duty to defend the revolutionary theory of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin against every revisionist falsification. This is one of the prerequisites for our victory. (*Applause.*)

THIRTY-THIRD SITTING

(August 13, 1935)

Presiding: Pieck

PIECK: Comrade Dimitrov has the floor to reply to the discussion on the second point of the Congress agenda: "The Fascist Offensive and the Tasks of the Communist International in the Fight for the Unity of the Working Class Against Fascism." *(Comrade Dimitrov is greeted with stormy applause. All rise. The delegates greet the speaker with cries of "Long live Comrade Dimitrov!" "Hurrah!" and a triple "Rot Front!" Continued, Prolonged applause.)*

COMRADE DIMITROV'S REPLY TO THE DISCUSSION

UNITY OF THE WORKING CLASS AGAINST FASCISM

DIMITROV: Comrades, the very full discussion on my report bears witness to the immense interest taken by the Congress in the fundamental tactical problems and tasks of the struggle of the working class against the offensive of capital and fascism, and against the threat of imperialist war.

Summing up the eight-day discussion, we can state that all the principal propositions contained in the report have met with the unanimous approval of the Congress. None of the speakers objected to the tactical line we have proposed or to the resolution which has been submitted.

I venture to say that at none of the previous Congresses of the Communist International has such ideological and political solidarity been revealed as at the present Congress. *(Applause.)* The complete

unanimity displayed at the Congress indicates that the necessity of revising our policy and tactics in accordance with the changed conditions and on the basis of the extremely abundant and instructive experience of the past few years, has come to be fully recognized in our ranks.

This unanimity may undoubtedly be regarded as one of the most important conditions for success in solving the paramount immediate problem of the international proletarian movement, namely, *establishing unity of action of all sections of the working class in the struggle against fascism.*

The successful solution of this problem requires, first, that Communists skilfully wield the weapon of *Marxist-Leninist analysis*, while carefully studying the actual situation and the alignment of class forces as these develop, and that they plan their activity and struggle accordingly. We must mercilessly root out the weakness, not infrequently observed among our comrades, for cut-and-dried schemes, lifeless formulas and ready-made patterns. We must put an end to the state of affairs in which Communists, when lacking the knowledge or ability for Marxist-Leninist analysis, substitute for it general phrases and slogans such as "the revolutionary way out of the crisis," without making the slightest serious attempt to explain what must be the conditions, the relationship of class forces, the degree of revolutionary maturity of the proletariat and mass of working people, and the level of influence of the Communist Party for making possible such a revolutionary way out of the crisis. Without such an analysis all these catchwords become "dud" shells, empty phrases which only obscure our tasks of the day.

Without a concrete Marxist-Leninist analysis we shall never be able correctly to present and solve the problem of fascism, the problems of the proletarian united front and the People's Front, the problem of our attitude toward bourgeois democracy, the problem of a united front government, the problem of the processes going on within the working class, particularly among the Social-Democratic workers, or any of the numerous other new and complex problems with which life itself and the development of the class struggle confront us now and will confront us in the future.

Second, we need *live people*—people who have grown up from the masses of the workers, have sprung from their every-day struggle, people of militant action, whole-heartedly devoted to the cause of the proletariat, people whose brains and hands will give effect to the decisions of our Congress. Without Bolshevik, Leninist-Stalinist cadres

we shall be unable to solve the enormous problems that confront the working people in the fight against fascism.

Third, we need people equipped with the compass of *Marxist-Leninist theory*, for people who are unable to make skilful use of this instrument slip into narrow, makeshift politics, are unable to look ahead, take decisions only from case to case, and lose the broad perspective of the struggle which shows the masses where we are going and whither we are leading the working people.

Fourth, we need the *organization of the masses* in order to put our decisions into practice. Our ideological and political influence alone is not enough. We must put a stop to reliance on the hope that the movement will develop *of its own accord*, which is one of our fundamental weaknesses. We must remember that without persistent, prolonged, patient, and sometimes seemingly thankless organizational work on our part the masses will never make for the Communist shore. In order to be able to organize the masses we must acquire the Lenin—Stalin art of making our decisions the property not only of the Communists but also of the widest masses of working people. We must learn to talk to the masses, not in the language of book formulas, but in the language of fighters for the cause of the masses, whose every word, whose every idea reflects the innermost thoughts and sentiments of millions.

It is primarily with these problems that I should like to deal in my reply to the discussion.

Comrades, the Congress has welcomed the new tactical lines with great enthusiasm and unanimity. Enthusiasm and unanimity are excellent things of course; but it is still better when these are combined with a deeply considered and critical approach to the tasks that confront us, with a proper mastery of the decisions adopted and a real understanding of the means and methods by which these decisions are to be applied to the particular circumstances of each country.

After all, we have unanimously adopted good resolutions before now, but the trouble was that we not infrequently adopted these decisions in a formal manner, and at best made them the property of only the small vanguard of the working class. Our decisions did not become flesh and blood for the wide masses; they did not become a guide to the action of millions of people.

Can we assert that we have already finally abandoned this formal approach to adopted decisions? No. It must be said that even at this Congress the speeches of some of the comrades gave indication of remnants of formalism; a desire made itself felt at times to substitute

for the concrete analysis of reality and living experience some sort of new scheme, some sort of new, over-simplified, lifeless formula, to represent *as actually existing* what we *desire*, but what does *not yet exist*.

The Struggle Against Fascism Must Be Concrete

No general characterization of fascism, however correct in itself, can relieve us of the need to study and take into account the special features of the development of fascism and the various forms of fascist dictatorship in the individual countries and at its various stages. It is necessary in each country to investigate, study and ascertain the national peculiarities, the specific national features of fascism and to map out accordingly effective methods and forms of struggle against fascism.

Lenin persistently warned us against such "stereotyped methods, such mechanical levelling, such equalization of tactical rules, rules of struggle." This warning is particularly to the point when it is a question of fighting an enemy who so subtly and Jesuitically exploits the national sentiments and prejudices of the masses and their anti-capitalist inclinations in the interests of big capital. *Such an enemy must be known to perfection, from every angle.* We must, without any delay whatever, react to his various manoeuvres, discover his hidden moves, be prepared to repel him in any arena and at any moment. We must not hesitate even to *learn* from the enemy if that will help us more quickly and more effectively to *wring his neck.* (Applause.)

It would be a gross mistake to lay down any sort of universal scheme of the development of fascism, to cover all countries and all peoples. Such a scheme would not help but would hamper us in carrying on a real struggle. Apart from everything else, it would result in indiscriminately thrusting into the camp of fascism those sections of the population which, if properly approached, could at a certain stage of development be brought into the struggle against fascism, or could at least be neutralized.

Let us take, for example, the development of fascism in France and in Germany. Some comrades believe that, generally speaking, fascism cannot develop as easily in France as in Germany. What is true and what is false in this contention? It is true that there were no such deep-seated democratic traditions in Germany as there are in France, which went through several revolutions in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. It is true that France is a country which won the war and imposed the Versailles system on other countries, that

the national sentiments of the French people have not been hurt as they have been in Germany, where this factor played such a great part. It is true that in France the basic masses of the peasantry are pro-republic and anti-fascist, especially in the south, in contrast with Germany, where even before fascism came to power a considerable section of the peasantry was under the influence of reactionary parties.

But, comrades, notwithstanding the existing differences in the development of the fascist movement in France and in Germany, notwithstanding the factors which impede the onslaught of fascism in France, it would be shortsighted not to notice the uninterrupted growth there of the fascist peril or to underestimate the possibility of a fascist *coup d'état*. Moreover, a number of factors in France favour the development of fascism. One must not forget that the economic crisis, which began later in France than in other capitalist countries, continues to become deeper and more acute, and that this greatly encourages the orgy of fascist demagoguery. French fascism holds strong positions in the army, among the officers, such as the National-Socialists did not have in the Reichswehr before their advent to power. Furthermore, in no other country, perhaps, has the parliamentary regime been corrupted to such an enormous extent and caused such indignation among the masses as in France, and the French fascists, as we know, use this demagogically in their fight against bourgeois democracy. Nor must it be forgotten that the development of fascism is furthered by the French bourgeoisie's keen fear of losing its political and military hegemony in Europe.

Hence it follows that the successes scored by the anti-fascist movement in France, of which Comrades Thorez and Cachin have spoken here and over which we so heartily rejoice, are still far from indicating that the working masses have definitely succeeded in blocking the road to fascism. We must emphatically stress once more the great importance of the tasks of the French working class in the struggle against fascism, of which I have already spoken in my report.

It would likewise be dangerous to cherish illusions regarding the weakness of fascism in other countries where it does not have a broad mass base. We have the example of such countries as Bulgaria, Yugoslavia and Finland, where fascism, although it had no broad base, came to power, relying on the armed forces of the state, and then sought to broaden its base by making use of the state apparatus.

Comrade Dutt was right in his contention that there has been a tendency among us to contemplate fascism in general, without taking into account the specific features of the fascist movement in the var-

ious countries, erroneously classifying all reactionary measures of the bourgeoisie as fascism and going as far as calling the entire non-Communist camp fascist. The struggle against fascism was not strengthened but rather weakened in consequence.

Even now we still have survivals of a stereotyped approach to the question of fascism. When some comrades assert that Roosevelt's "New Deal" represents an even clearer and more pronounced form of the development of the bourgeoisie toward fascism than the "National Government" in Great Britain, for example, is this not a manifestation of such a stereotyped approach to the question? One must be very partial to hackneyed schemes not to see that the most reactionary circles of American finance capital, which are attacking Roosevelt, are above all the very force which is stimulating and organizing the fascist movement in the United States. Not to see the beginnings of real fascism in the United States behind the hypocritical outpourings of these circles "in defence of the democratic rights of the American citizen" is tantamount to misleading the working class in the struggle against its worst enemy.

In the colonial and semi-colonial countries also, as was mentioned in the discussion, certain fascist groups are developing; but, of course, there can be no question of the kind of fascism that we are accustomed to see in Germany, Italy and other capitalist countries. Here we must study and take into account the quite special economic, political and historical conditions, in accordance with which fascism is assuming, and will continue to assume, peculiar forms of its own.

Unable to approach the phenomena of real life concretely, some comrades who suffer from mental laziness substitute general, noncommittal *formulas* for a careful and concrete study of the actual situation and the relationship of class forces. They remind us, not of sharpshooters who shoot with unerring aim, but of those "crack" riflemen who regularly and unfailingly miss the target, shooting either too high or too low, too near or too far. But we, comrades, as Communist fighters in the labour movement, as the revolutionary vanguard of the working class want to be sharpshooters who unfailingly hit the target. (*Prolonged applause.*)

The United Proletarian Front and the Anti-Fascist People's Front

Some comrades are quite needlessly racking their brains over the problem of *what to begin with—the united proletarian front or the anti-fascist People's Front.*

Some say that we cannot start forming the anti-fascist People's Front until we have organized a solid united front of the proletariat.

Others argue that, since the establishment of the united proletarian front meets in a number of countries with the resistance of the reactionary part of Social-Democracy, it is better to start at once with building up the People's Front, and then develop the united working class front on this basis.

Evidently both groups fail to understand that the united proletarian front and the anti-fascist People's Front are connected by the *living dialectics of struggle*; that they are interwoven, the one passing into the other in the process of the practical struggle against fascism, and that there is certainly no Chinese wall to keep them apart.

For it cannot be seriously supposed that it is possible to establish a genuine anti-fascist People's Front without securing the unity of action of the working class itself, the *leading force* of this anti-fascist People's Front. At the same time, the further development of the united proletarian front depends, to a considerable degree, upon its transformation into a People's Front against fascism.

Comrades! Just picture to yourselves a devotee of cut-and-dried theories of this kind, gazing upon our resolution and contriving his pet scheme with the zeal of a true pedant:

First, local united proletarian front from below;

Then, regional united front from below;

Thereafter, united front from above, passing through the same stages;

Then, unity in the trade union movement;

After that, the enlistment of other anti-fascist parties;

This to be followed by the extended People's Front, from above and from below;

After which the movement must be raised to a higher level, politicalized, revolutionized, and so on and so forth. (*Laughter.*)

You will say, comrades, that this is sheer nonsense. I agree with you. But the unfortunate thing is that in some form or other this kind of sectarian nonsense is still to be found quite frequently in our ranks.

How does the matter really stand? Of course, we must strive everywhere for a wide People's Front of struggle against fascism. But in a number of countries we shall not get beyond general talk about the People's Front unless we succeed in mobilizing the masses of the workers for the purpose of breaking down the resistance of the reactionary section of Social-Democracy to the proletarian united front of

struggle. Primarily this is how the matter stands in Great Britain, where the working class comprises the majority of the population and where the bulk of the working class follows the lead of the trade unions and the Labour Party. That is how matters stand in Belgium and in the Scandinavian countries, where the numerically small Communist Parties must face strong mass trade unions and numerically large Social-Democratic Parties.

In these countries the Communists would commit a very serious political mistake if they shirked the struggle to establish a united proletarian front, under cover of general talk about the People's Front, which cannot be formed without the participation of the mass working-class organizations. In order to bring about a genuine People's Front in these countries, the Communists must carry out an enormous amount of political and organizational work among the masses of the workers. They must overcome the preconceived ideas of these masses, who regard their large reformist organizations as already the embodiment of proletarian unity. They must convince these masses that the establishment of a united front with the Communists means a shift on the part of those masses to the position of the class struggle, and that only this shift guarantees success in the struggle against the offensive of capital and fascism. We shall not overcome our difficulties by setting ourselves much wider tasks here. On the contrary, in fighting to remove these difficulties we shall, in fact and not in words alone, prepare the ground for the creation of a genuine People's Front of struggle against fascism, against the capitalist offensive and against the threat of imperialist war.

The problem is different in countries like Poland, where a strong peasant movement is developing alongside the labour movement, where the peasant masses have their own organizations, which are becoming radicalized as a result of the agrarian crisis, and where national oppression evokes indignation among the national minorities. Here the development of the People's Front of struggle will proceed parallel with the development of the united proletarian front, and at times in this type of country the movement for a general People's Front may even outstrip the movement for a working-class front.

Take a country like Spain, which is in the process of a bourgeois-democratic revolution. Can it be said that because the proletariat is split up into numerous small organizations, complete fighting unity of the working class must first be established here before a workers' and peasants' front against Lerroux and Gil Robles is created? By tackling the question in this way we would isolate the proletariat from the

peasantry, we would in effect be withdrawing the slogan of the agrarian revolution, and we would make it easier for the enemies of the people to disunite the proletariat and the peasantry and set the peasantry in opposition to the working class. Yet this, comrades, as is well known, was one of the main reasons why the working class was defeated in the October events of 1934 in Asturia.

However, one thing must not be forgotten: in all countries where the proletariat is comparatively small in numbers, where the peasantry and the urban petty-bourgeois strata predominate, it is all the more necessary to make every effort to set up a firm united front of the working class itself, so that it may be able to take its place as the leading factor in relation to all the working people.

Thus, comrades, in attacking the problem of the proletarian front and the People's Front, there can be no general panacea suitable for all cases, all countries, all peoples. In this matter universalism, the application of one and the same recipe to all countries, is equivalent, if you will allow me to say so, to ignorance; and ignorance should be flogged, even when it stalks about, nay, particularly when it stalks about, in the cloak of universal cut-and-dried schemes. (*Applause.*)

The Role of Social-Democracy and Its Attitude Toward the United Front of the Proletariat

Comrades, in view of the tactical problems confronting us, it is very important to give a correct reply to the question of whether Social-Democracy at the present time is still the principal bulwark of the bourgeoisie, and if so, where?

Some of the comrades who participated in the discussion (Comrades Florin, Dutt) touched upon this question, but in view of its importance a fuller reply must be given to it, for it is a question which workers of all trends, particularly Social-Democratic workers, are asking and cannot help asking.

It must be borne in mind that in a number of countries the position of Social-Democracy in the bourgeois state, and its attitude toward the bourgeoisie, have been undergoing a change.

In the first place, the crisis has severely shaken the position of even the most secure sections of the working class, the so-called aristocracy of labour, which, as we know, is the main support of Social-Democracy. These sections, too, are beginning more and more to revise their views as to the expediency of the policy of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie.

Second, as I pointed out in my report, the bourgeoisie in a number of countries is itself compelled to abandon bourgeois democracy and resort to the terroristic form of dictatorship, depriving Social-Democracy not only of its previous position in the state system of finance capital, but also, under certain conditions, of its legal status, persecuting and even suppressing it.

Third, under the influence of the lessons learned from the defeat of the workers in Germany, Austria and Spain,¹ a defeat which was largely the result of the Social-Democratic policy of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie, and, on the other hand, under the influence of the victory of socialism in the Soviet Union as a result of Bolshevik policy and the application of revolutionary Marxism, the Social-Democratic workers are becoming revolutionized and are beginning to turn to the class struggle against the bourgeoisie.

The combined effect of all this has been to make it increasingly difficult, and in some countries actually impossible, for Social-Democracy to preserve its former role of bulwark of the bourgeoisie.

Failure to understand this is particularly harmful in those countries in which the fascist dictatorship has deprived Social-Democracy of its legal status. From this point of view the self-criticism of those German comrades who in their speeches mentioned the necessity of ceasing to cling to the letter of obsolete formulas and decisions concerning Social-Democracy, of ceasing to ignore the changes that have taken place in its position, was correct. It is clear that if we ignore these changes, it will lead to a distortion of our policy for bringing about the unity of the working class, and will make it easier for the reactionary elements of the Social-Democratic Parties to sabotage the united front.

The process of revolutionization in the ranks of the Social-Democratic Parties, now going on in all countries, is developing unevenly. It must not be imagined that the Social-Democratic workers who are becoming revolutionized will *at once* and on a mass scale pass over to the position of consistent class struggle and will *straightway* unite with the Communists without any intermediate stages. In a number of countries this will be a more or less difficult, complicated and prolonged process, essentially dependent, at any rate, on the correctness of our policy and tactics. We must even reckon with the possibility that, in passing from the position of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie to the position of class struggle against the bourgeoisie, some Social-

¹ Reference is to the fighting in Asturia in 1934.—Ed.

Democratic Parties and organizations will continue to exist for a time as independent organizations or parties. In such event there can, of course, be no thought of such Social-Democratic organizations or parties being regarded as a bulwark of the bourgeoisie.

It cannot be expected that those Social-Democratic workers who are under the influence of the ideology of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie, which has been instilled in them for decades, will break with this ideology of their own accord, by the action of objective causes alone. No. It is our business, the business of Communists, to help them free themselves from the hold of reformist ideology. The work of explaining the principles and program of communism must be carried on patiently, in a comradely fashion, and must be adapted to the degree of development of the individual Social-Democratic workers. Our criticism of Social-Democracy must become more concrete and systematic, and must be based on the experience of the Social-Democratic masses themselves. It must be borne in mind that primarily by utilizing their experience in the joint struggle with the Communists against the class enemy will it be possible and necessary to facilitate and accelerate the revolutionary development of the Social-Democratic workers. There is no more effective way for overcoming the doubts and hesitations of the Social-Democratic workers than by their participation in the proletarian united front.

We shall do all in our power to make it easier, not only for the Social-Democratic workers, but also for those leading members of the Social-Democratic Parties and organizations who sincerely desire to adopt the revolutionary class position, to work and fight with us against the class enemy. At the same time we declare that any Social-Democratic functionary, lower official or worker who continues to uphold the disruptive tactics of the reactionary Social-Democratic leaders, who comes out against the united front and thus directly or indirectly aids the class enemy, will thereby incur at least equal guilt before the working class as those who are historically responsible for having supported the Social-Democratic policy of class collaboration, the policy which in a number of European countries doomed the revolution in 1918 and cleared the way for fascism.

The attitude to the united front marks the dividing line between the reactionary sections of Social-Democracy and the sections that are becoming revolutionary. Our assistance to the latter will be the more effective the more we intensify our fight against the reactionary camp of Social-Democracy that takes part in a bloc with the bourgeoisie. And within the Left camp the self-determination of its various elements

will take place the sooner, the more determinedly the Communists fight for a united front with the Social-Democratic Parties. The experience of the class struggle and the participation of the Social-Democrats in the united front movement will show who in that camp will prove to be "Left" in words and who is really Left.

The United Front Government

While the attitude of Social-Democracy toward the practical realization of the proletarian united front is, generally speaking, the chief sign in every country of whether the previous role in the bourgeois state of the Social-Democratic Party or of its individual parts has changed, and if so, to what extent—the attitude of Social-Democracy on the issue of a united front government will be a particularly clear test in this respect.

When a situation arises in which the question of creating a united front government becomes an immediate practical problem, this issue will become a decisive test of the policy of Social-Democracy in the given country: either jointly with the bourgeoisie, that is moving toward fascism, against the working class; or jointly with the revolutionary proletariat against fascism and reaction, not merely in words but in deeds. That is how the question will inevitably present itself at the time the united front government is formed as well as while it is in power.

With regard to the character and conditions for the formation of the united front government or anti-fascist People's Front government, I think that my report gave what was necessary for general tactical direction. To expect us over and above this to indicate all possible forms and all conditions under which such governments may be formed would mean to lose oneself in barren conjecture.

I would like to utter a note of warning against oversimplification or the application of cut-and-dried schemes in this question. Life is more complex than any scheme. For example, it would be wrong to imagine that the united front government is an *indispensable stage* on the road to the establishment of proletarian dictatorship. That is just as wrong as the former assertion that there will be *no intermediary stages* in the fascist countries and that fascist dictatorship is *certain to be immediately superseded* by proletarian dictatorship.

The whole question boils down to this: Will the proletariat itself be prepared at the decisive moment for the direct overthrow of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of its own power, and will it be able in that event to ensure the support of its allies? Or will the

movement of the united proletarian front and the anti-fascist People's Front at the particular stage be in a position only to suppress or overthrow fascism, without directly proceeding to abolish the dictatorship of the bourgeoisie? In the latter case it would be an intolerable piece of political short-sightedness, and not serious revolutionary politics, on this ground alone to refuse to create and support a united front or a People's Front government.

It is likewise not difficult to understand that the establishment of a united front government in countries where fascism is not yet in power is something *different* from the creation of such a government in countries where the fascist dictatorship holds sway. In the latter countries a united front government can be created *only in the process of overthrowing fascist rule*. In countries where the *bourgeois-democratic revolution* is *developing*, a People's Front government may become the government of the democratic dictatorship of the working class and the peasantry.

As I have already pointed out in my report, the Communists will do all in their power to support a united front government to the extent that the latter will really fight against the enemies of the people and grant freedom of action to the Communist Party and to the working class. The question of whether Communists will take part in the government will be determined entirely by the actual situation prevailing at the time. Such questions will be settled as they arise. No ready-made recipes can be prescribed in advance.

Attitude Toward Bourgeois Democracy

It has been pointed out here that while mobilizing the masses to repel the onslaught of fascism against the rights of the working people, the Polish Party at the same time "had its misgivings about formulating positive democratic demands, fearing that this would create democratic illusions among the masses." The Polish Party is, of course, not the only one in which such fear of formulating positive democratic demands exists in one form or another.

Where does this fear come from, comrades? It comes from an incorrect, non-dialectical conception of our attitude toward bourgeois democracy. We Communists are unswerving upholders of Soviet democracy, the great example of which is the proletarian dictatorship in the Soviet Union, where the introduction of equal suffrage and the direct and secret ballot has been proclaimed by resolution of the Seventh Congress of Soviets, at the very time that the last relics of

bourgeois democracy are being wiped out in the capitalist countries. This Soviet democracy presupposes the victory of the proletarian revolution, the conversion of private property of the means of production into public property, the adoption by the overwhelming majority of the people of the road to socialism. This democracy does not represent a final form; it develops and will continue to develop in proportion as further progress is made in socialist construction, in the creation of classless society and in the overcoming of the survivals of capitalism in economic life and in the minds of the people.

But today the millions of working people living under capitalism are faced with the necessity of deciding their attitude to *those forms* in which the rule of the bourgeoisie is clad in the various countries. We are not Anarchists, and it is not at all a matter of indifference to us what kind of political regime exists in any given country: whether a bourgeois dictatorship in the form of bourgeois democracy, even with democratic rights and liberties greatly curtailed, or a bourgeois dictatorship in its open, fascist form. While being upholders of Soviet democracy, *we shall defend every inch of the democratic gains which the working class has wrested in the course of years of stubborn struggle, and shall resolutely fight to extend these gains.*

How great were the sacrifices of the British working class before it secured the right to strike, a legal status for its trade unions, the right of assembly and freedom of the press, extension of the franchise, and other rights! How many tens of thousands of workers gave their lives in the revolutionary battles fought in France in the nineteenth century to obtain the elementary rights and the lawful opportunity of organizing their forces for the struggle against the exploiters! The proletariat of all countries has shed much of its blood to win bourgeois-democratic liberties, and will naturally fight with all its strength to retain them.

Our attitude to bourgeois democracy is not the same under all conditions. For instance, at the time of the October Revolution, the Russian Bolsheviks engaged in a life-and death struggle against all those political parties which, under the slogan of the defence of bourgeois democracy, opposed the establishment of the proletarian dictatorship. The Bolsheviks fought these parties because the banner of bourgeois democracy had at that time become the standard around which all counter-revolutionary forces mobilized to challenge the victory of the proletariat. The situation is quite different in the capitalist countries at present. Now the fascist counter-revolution is attacking bourgeois

democracy in an effort to establish the most barbaric regime of exploitation and suppression of the working masses. Now the working masses in a number of capitalist countries are faced with the necessity of making a *definite* choice, and of making it today, not between proletarian dictatorship and bourgeois democracy, but between bourgeois democracy and fascism.

Besides, we have now a situation which differs from that which existed, for example, in the epoch of capitalist stabilization. At that time the fascist danger was not as acute as it is today. At that time it was bourgeois dictatorship in the form of bourgeois democracy that the revolutionary workers were facing in a number of countries and it was against bourgeois democracy that they were concentrating their fire. In Germany, they fought against the Weimar Republic, not because it was a republic, but because it was a *bourgeois* republic that was engaged in crushing the revolutionary movement of the proletariat, especially in 1918-20 and in 1923.

But could the Communists retain the same position also when the fascist movement began to raise its head, when, for instance, in 1932, the fascists in Germany were organizing and arming hundreds of thousands of storm troopers against the working class? Of course not. It was the mistake of the Communists in a number of countries, particularly in Germany, that they failed to take account of the changes that had taken place, but continued to repeat the slogans and maintain the tactical positions that had been correct a few years before, especially when the struggle for the proletarian dictatorship was an immediate issue, and when the entire German counter-revolution was rallying under the banner of the Weimar Republic, as it did in 1918-20.

And the circumstance that even today we can still notice in our ranks a fear of launching positive democratic slogans indicates how little our comrades have mastered the Marxist-Leninist method of approaching such important problems of our tactics. Some say that the struggle for democratic rights may divert the workers from the struggle for the proletarian dictatorship. It may not be amiss to recall what Lenin said on this question:

"It would be a fundamental mistake to suppose that the struggle for democracy can divert the proletariat from the socialist revolution, or obscure, or overshadow it, etc. On the contrary, just as socialism cannot be victorious unless it introduces complete democracy, so the proletariat will be unable to prepare for

victory over the bourgeoisie unless it wages a many-sided, consistent and revolutionary struggle for democracy.”¹

These words should be firmly fixed in the memories of all our comrades, bearing in mind that in history great revolutions have grown out of small movements for the defence of the elementary rights of the working class. But in order to be able to link up the struggle for democratic rights with the struggle of the working class for socialism, it is necessary first and foremost to discard any cut-and-dried approach to the question of defence of bourgeois democracy. (*Applause.*)

A Correct Line Alone Is Not Enough

Comrades it is clear, of course, that for the Communist International and each of its Sections the fundamental thing is to work out a correct line. But a correct line alone is not enough for concrete leadership in the class struggle.

For that, a number of conditions must be fulfilled, above all the following:

First, *organizational guarantees* that adopted decisions will be carried out in practice and that all obstacles in the way will be resolutely overcome. What Comrade Stalin said at the Seventeenth Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union about the conditions necessary to carry out the line of the Party can and should be applied also, in its entirety, to the decisions which our Congress adopts. Comrade Stalin said:

“Some people think that it is sufficient to draw up a correct Party line, proclaim it from the housetops, enunciate it in the form of general theses and resolutions, and carry them unanimously in order to make victory come of itself, automatically, so to speak. This, of course, is wrong. This is a great delusion. Only incorrigible bureaucrats and office rats can think that. . . . Good resolutions and declarations in favour of the general line of the Party are only a beginning; they merely express the desire to win, but it is not victory. After the correct line has been given, after a correct solution of the problem has been found, success depends on the manner in which the work is organized, on the organization of the struggle for the application of the line of the Party, on the proper selection of people, on supervising the fulfilment of the decisions of the leading organs. Without this the correct line of the Party and the correct

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Selected Works*, Vol. V.

solutions are in danger of being severely damaged. More than that, after the correct political line has been given, the organizational work decides everything, including the fate of the political line itself, *i.e.*, whether it is fulfilled or not.”¹

It is hardly necessary to add anything to these striking words of Comrade Stalin, which must become a guiding principle in all the work of our Parties.

Another condition is the *ability to convert decisions of the Communist International and its Sections into decisions of the widest masses themselves*. This is all the more necessary now, when we are faced with the task of organizing a united front of the proletariat and drawing very wide masses of the people into an anti-fascist People's Front. The political and tactical genius of Lenin and Stalin stands out most clearly and vividly in their masterly ability to get the masses to understand the correct line and the slogans of the Party through their own experience. If we trace the history of Bolshevism, that greatest of treasure houses of the political strategy and tactics of the revolutionary labour movement, we can become convinced that the Bolsheviks never substituted methods of leading the Party for methods of leading the masses.

Comrade Stalin pointed out that one of the peculiarities of the tactics of the Russian Bolsheviks in the period of preparation for the October Revolution consisted in their ability correctly to determine the path and the turns which naturally lead the masses to the slogans of the Party, to the very “threshold of the revolution,” helping them to sense, to test and to realize from their own experience the correctness of these slogans. They did not confuse leadership of the Party with leadership of the masses, but clearly saw the difference between leadership of the first kind and leadership of the second kind. In this way they worked out tactics as the science not only of Party leadership, but also of the leadership of the millions of working people.

Furthermore, it must be borne in mind that *the masses cannot assimilate our decisions unless we learn to speak the language which the masses understand*. We do not always know how to speak simply, concretely, in images which are familiar and intelligible to the masses. We are still unable to refrain from abstract formulas which we have learnt by rote. As a matter of fact, if you look through our leaflets, newspapers, resolutions and theses, you will find that they are often written in a language and style so heavy that they are difficult for

¹ J. Stalin, *Report to the Seventeenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.) on the Work of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.)*.

even our Party functionaries to understand, let alone the rank-and-file workers.

If we reflect, comrades, that workers, especially in fascist countries, who distribute or only read these leaflets risk their very lives by doing so, we shall realize still more clearly the need of writing for the masses in a language which they understand, so that the sacrifices made shall not have been in vain.

The same applies in no less degree to our oral agitation and propaganda. We must admit quite frankly that in this respect the fascists have often proven more dexterous and flexible than many of our comrades.

I recall, for example, a meeting of unemployed in Berlin before Hitler's accession to power. It was at the time of the trial of those notorious swindlers and speculators, the Sklarek brothers, which dragged on for several months. A National-Socialist speaker in addressing the meeting made demagogic use of that trial to further his own ends. He referred to the swindles, the bribery and other crimes committed by the Sklarek brothers, emphasized that the trial had been dragging for months and figured out how many hundreds of thousands of marks it had already cost the German people. To the accompaniment of loud applause the speaker declared that such bandits as the Sklarek brothers should have been shot without any ado, and the money wasted on the trial should have gone to the unemployed.

A Communist rose and asked for the floor. The chairman at first refused but under the pressure of the audience, which wanted to hear a Communist, he had to let him speak. When the Communist got up on the platform, everybody awaited with tense expectation what the Communist speaker would have to say. Well, what did he say?

"Comrades," he began in a loud and strong voice, "the Plenum of the Communist International has just closed. It showed the way to the salvation of the working class. The chief task it puts before you, comrades, is '*to win the majority of the working classes*.'... (Laughter.) The Plenum pointed out that the unemployed movement must be 'politicalized.' (Laughter.) The Plenum calls on us to raise it to a higher level." (Laughter.) He went on in the same strain, evidently under the impression that he was "explaining" authentic decisions of the Plenum.

Could such a speech appeal to the unemployed? Could they find any satisfaction in the fact that first we intended to politicalize, then revolutionize, and finally mobilize them in order to raise their movement to a higher level? (Laughter, applause.)

Sitting in a corner of the hall, I observed with chagrin how the unemployed, who had been so eager to hear a Communist in order to find out from him what to do concretely, began to yawn and display unmistakable signs of disappointment. And I was not at all surprised when toward the end the chairman rudely cut our speaker short without any protest from the meeting.

This, unfortunately, is not the only case of its kind in our agitation-al work. Nor were such cases confined to Germany. To agitate in such fashion means to agitate against one's own cause. It is high time to put an end once and for all to these, to say the least, childish methods of agitation.

During my report, the chairman, Comrade Kuusinen, received a characteristic letter from the floor of the Congress addressed to me. Let me read it:

"In your speech at the Congress, please take up the following question, namely, that all resolutions and decisions adopted in the future by the Communist International be written so that not only trained Communists can get the meaning, but that any working man reading the material of the Comintern might without any preliminary training be able to see at once what the Communists want, and of what service communism is to mankind. Some Party leaders forget this. They must be reminded of it, and very strongly, too. Also that agitation for communism be conducted in understandable language."

I do not know exactly who is the author of this letter, but I have no doubt that this comrade voiced in his letter the opinion and desire of millions of workers. Many of our comrades think that the more high-sounding words, and the more formulas and theses unintelligible to the masses they use, the better their agitation and propaganda, forgetting that the greatest leaders and theoreticians of the working class of our epoch, Lenin and Stalin, have always spoken and written in highly popular language, readily understood by the masses.

Every one of us must make this a law, a Bolshevik law, an elementary rule:

When writing or speaking always have in mind the rank-and-file worker who must understand you, must believe in your appeal and be ready to follow you! You must have in mind those for whom you write, to whom you speak. (Applause.)

Cadres

Comrades, our best resolutions will remain scraps of paper if we lack the people who can put them into effect. Unfortunately, however, I must state that the problem of *cadres*, one of the most important questions facing us, has received almost no attention at this Congress. The report of the Executive Committee of the Communist International was discussed for seven days, there were many speakers from various countries, but only a few, and they only in passing, discussed this question, so extremely vital for the Communist Parties and the labour movement. In their practical work our Parties have not yet realized by far that *people, cadres, decide everything*. They have not learnt to do as Comrade Stalin teaches us, namely, to cultivate cadres "as a gardener cultivates his favourite fruit tree," "to appreciate people, to appreciate cadres, to appreciate every worker who is capable of helping our common cause."

A negligent attitude to the problem of cadres is all the more impermissible for the reason that we are constantly losing some of the most valuable of our cadres in the struggle. For we are not a learned society but a militant movement which is constantly in the firing line. Our most energetic, most courageous and most class conscious elements are in the front ranks. It is precisely these front-line men that the enemy hunts down, murders, throws into jail and concentration camps and subjects to excruciating torture, particularly in fascist countries. This gives rise to the urgent necessity of constantly replenishing the ranks, cultivating and training new cadres as well as carefully preserving the existing cadres.

The problem of cadres is of particular urgency for the additional reason that under our influence the mass united front movement is gaining momentum and bringing forward many thousands of new working-class militants. Moreover, it is not only young revolutionary elements, not only workers just becoming revolutionary, who have never before participated in a political movement, that stream into our ranks. Very often former members and militants of the Social-Democratic Parties also join us. These new cadres require special attention, particularly in the illegal Communist Parties, the more so because in their practical work these cadres with their poor theoretical training frequently come up against very serious political problems which they have to solve for themselves.

The problem of what shall be the *correct policy with regard to cadres* is a very serious one for our Parties, as well as for the Young

Communist Leagues and for all other mass organizations—for the entire revolutionary labour movement.

What does a correct policy with regard to cadres imply?

First, *knowing one's people*. As a rule there is no systematic study of cadres in our Parties. Only recently have the Communist Parties of France and Poland and, in the East, the Communist Party of China, achieved certain successes in this direction. The Communist Party of Germany, before its underground period, had also undertaken a study of its cadres. The experience of these Parties has shown that as soon as they began to study their people, Party workers were discovered who had remained unnoticed before. On the other hand, the Parties began to be purged of alien elements who were ideologically and politically harmful. It is sufficient to point to the example of Célor and Barbé in France, who, when put under the Bolshevik microscope, turned out to be agents of the class enemy and were thrown out of the Party. In Poland and in Hungary the verification of cadres made it easier to discover nests of provocateurs, agents of the enemy, who had sedulously concealed their identity.

Second, *proper promotion of cadres*. Promotion should not be something casual but one of the normal functions of the Party. It is bad when promotion is made exclusively on the basis of narrow Party considerations, without regard to whether the Communist promoted has contact with the masses or not. Promotion should take place on the basis of the ability of the various Party workers to discharge particular functions, and of their popularity among the masses. We have examples in our Parties of promotions which have produced excellent results. For instance, we have a Spanish woman Communist, sitting in the Presidium of this Congress, Comrade Dolores. Two years ago she was still a rank-and-file Party worker. But in the very first clashes with the class enemy she proved to be an excellent agitator and fighter. Subsequently promoted to the leading body of the Party she has proved herself a most worthy member of that body. (*Applause.*)

I could point to a number of similar cases in several other countries, but in the majority of cases promotions are made in an unorganized and haphazard manner, and therefore are not always fortunate. Sometimes moralizers, phrasemongers and chatterboxes who actually harm the cause are promoted to leading positions.

Third, *the ability to use people to best advantage*. We must be able to ascertain and utilize the valuable qualities of every single active member. There are no ideal people; we must take them as they are and correct their weaknesses and shortcomings. We know of

glaring examples in our Parties of the wrong utilization of good, honest Communists who might have been very useful had they been given work that they were better fit to do.

Fourth, *proper distribution of cadres*. First of all, we must see to it that the main links of the movement are in the charge of capable people who have contacts with the masses, who come from the very heart of the masses, who have initiative and are staunch. The more important districts should have an appropriate number of such activists. In capitalist countries it is not an easy matter to transfer cadres from one place to another. Such a task encounters a number of obstacles and difficulties, including lack of funds, family considerations, etc., difficulties which must be taken into account and properly overcome. But usually we neglect to do this altogether.

Fifth, *systematic assistance to cadres*. This assistance should take the form of careful instruction, comradely control, rectification of shortcomings and mistakes and concrete, everyday guidance.

Sixth, *proper care for the preservation of cadres*. We must learn promptly to withdraw Party workers to the rear whenever circumstances so require, and replace them by others. We must demand that the Party leadership, particularly in countries where the Parties are illegal, assume paramount responsibility for the preservation of cadres. (*Applause.*) The proper preservation of cadres also presupposes highly efficient organization of secrecy in the Party. In certain of our Parties many comrades think that the Parties are already prepared for the event of illegality even though they have reorganized themselves only formally, according to readymade rules. We had to pay very dearly for having started the real work of reorganization only after the Party had gone underground, under the direct heavy blows of the enemy. Remember the severe losses the Communist Party of Germany suffered during its transition to underground conditions! Its experience should serve as a serious warning to those of our Parties which today are still legal but may lose their legal status tomorrow.

Only a correct policy in regard to cadres will enable our Parties to develop and utilize all available forces to the utmost, and obtain from the enormous reservoir of the mass movement ever fresh reinforcements of new and better active workers.

What should be our *main criteria* in selecting cadres?

First, *absolute devotion* to the cause of the working class, *loyalty to the Party*, tested in face of the enemy—in battle, in prison, in court.

Second, the closest possible *contact with the masses*. The comrades

concerned must be wholly absorbed in the interests of the masses, feel the life pulse of the masses, know their sentiments and requirements. The prestige of the leaders of our Party organizations should be based, first of all, on the fact that the masses regard them as their leaders and are convinced through their own experience of their ability as leaders and of their determination and self-sacrifice in struggle.

Third, *ability independently to find one's bearings* and not to be afraid of *assuming responsibility in making decisions*. He who fears to take responsibility is not a leader. He who is unable to display initiative, who says: "I will do only what I am told," is not a Bolshevik. Only he is a real Bolshevik leader who does not lose his head at moments of defeat, who does not get a swelled head at moments of success, who displays indomitable firmness in carrying out decisions. Cadres develop and grow best when they are placed in the position of having to solve concrete problems of the struggle independently, and are aware that they are fully responsible for their decisions.

Fourth, *discipline and Bolshevik hardening* in the struggle against the class enemy as well as in their irreconcilable opposition to all deviations from the Bolshevik line.

We must place all the more emphasis on these conditions which determine the correct selection of cadres, because in practice preference is very often given to a comrade who, for example, is able to write well and is a good speaker, but is not a man or woman of action, and is not as suited for the struggle as some other comrade who perhaps may not be able to write or speak so well, but is a staunch comrade, possessing initiative and contact with the masses, and is capable of going into battle and leading others into battle. (*Applause.*) Have there not been many cases of sectarians, doctrinaires or moralizers crowding out loyal mass workers, genuine working-class leaders?

Our leading cadres should combine the knowledge of *what* they must do—with *Bolshevik stamina, revolutionary strength of character and the will power to carry it through*.

In connection with the question of cadres, permit me, comrades, to dwell also on the very great part which the International Labour Defence is called upon to play in relation to the cadres of the labour movement. The material and moral assistance which the I.L.D. organizations render to our prisoners and their families, to political emigrants, to prosecuted revolutionaries and anti-fascists, has saved the lives and preserved the strength and fighting capacity of thousands upon thousands of most valuable fighters of the working class in many countries. Those of us who have been in jail have found out directly

through our own experience the enormous significance of the activity of the I.L.D. (*Applause.*)

By its activity the I.L.D. has won the affection, devotion and deep gratitude of hundreds of thousands of proletarians and of revolutionary elements among the peasantry and intellectuals.

Under present conditions, when bourgeois reaction is growing, when fascism is raging and the class struggle is becoming more acute, the role of the I.L.D. is increasing immensely. The task now before the I.L.D. is to become a genuine mass organization of the working people in all capitalist countries (particularly in fascist countries, where it must adapt itself to the special conditions prevailing there). It must become, so to speak, a sort of "Red Cross" of the united front of the proletariat and of the anti-fascist People's Front, embracing millions of working people—the "Red Cross" of the army of the toiling classes embattled against fascism, fighting for peace and socialism. If the I.L.D. is to perform its part successfully, it must train thousands of its own active militants, a multitude of its own cadres, *I.L.D. cadres*, answering in their character and capacity to the *special purposes* of this extremely important organization.

And here I must say as categorically and as sharply as possible that while a *bureaucratic* approach and a soulless attitude toward people is despicable in the labour movement taken in general, in the sphere of activity of the I.L.D. such an attitude is an evil bordering on the *criminal*. (*Applause.*) The fighters of the working class, the victims of reaction and fascism who are suffering agony in torture chambers and concentration camps, political emigrants and their families, should all meet with the most sympathetic care and solicitude on the part of the organizations and functionaries of the I.L.D. (*Prolonged applause.*)

The I.L.D. must still better appreciate and discharge its duty of assisting the fighters in the proletarian and anti-fascist movement, particularly in physically and morally preserving the cadres of the labour movement. The Communists and revolutionary workers who are active in the I.L.D. organizations must realize at every step the enormous responsibility they bear before the working class and the Communist International for the successful fulfilment of the role and tasks of the I.L.D. (*Applause.*)

Comrades, as you know, cadres receive their best training *in the process of struggle*, in surmounting difficulties and withstanding tests, and also from *favourable and unfavourable* examples of conduct. We

have hundreds of examples of splendid conduct in times of strikes, during demonstrations, in jail, in court. We have thousands of instances of heroism, but unfortunately also not a few cases of pigeon-heartedness, lack of firmness and even desertion. We often forget these examples, both good and bad. We do not teach people to benefit by these examples. We do not show them *what* should be emulated and *what* rejected. We must study the conduct of our comrades and militant workers during class conflicts, under police interrogation, in the jails and concentration camps, in court, etc. The good examples should be brought to light and held up as models to be followed, and all that is rotten, non-Bolshevik and philistine should be cast aside.

Since the Leipzig trial we have had quite a number of our comrades whose statements before bourgeois and fascist courts have shown that numerous cadres are growing up with an excellent understanding of what really constitutes Bolshevik conduct in court.

But how many even of you delegates to the Congress know the details of the trial of the railwaymen in Rumania, know about the trial of Fiete Schulz, who was subsequently beheaded by the fascists in Germany, the trial of our valiant Japanese comrade Ichikawa, the trial of the Bulgarian revolutionary soldiers, and many other trials at which admirable examples of proletarian heroism were displayed? (*Storm of applause; all rise.*)

Such worthy examples of proletarian heroism must be popularized, must be contrasted with the manifestations of faint-heartedness, philistinism, and every kind of rottenness and frailty in our ranks and the ranks of the working class. These examples must be used most extensively in educating the cadres of the labour movement.

Comrades, our Party leaders often complain that *there are no people*; that they are short of people for agitational and propaganda work, for the newspapers, the trade unions, for work among the youth, among women. Not enough, not enough—that is the cry. We simply haven't got the people. To this we could reply in the old yet eternally new words of Lenin:

"There are no people—yet there are enormous numbers of people. There are enormous numbers of people, because the working class and ever more diverse strata of society, year after year, advance from their ranks an increasing number of discontented people who desire to protest.... At the same time we have no people, because we have... no talented organizers capable of organizing extensive and at the same time uniform and harmonious

work that would give employment to all forces, even the most inconsiderable.”¹

These words of Lenin must be thoroughly grasped by our Parties and applied by them as a guide in their everyday work. There are plenty of people. They need only be discovered in our own organizations, during strikes and demonstrations, in various mass organizations of the workers, in united front bodies. They must be helped to grow in the course of their work and struggle; they must be put in a situation where they can really be useful to the workers' cause.

Comrades, we Communists are people of action. Ours is the problem of practical struggle against the offensive of capital, against fascism and the threat of imperialist war, the struggle for the overthrow of capitalism. It is precisely this *practical* task that obliges Communist cadres to equip themselves *with revolutionary theory*. For, as Stalin, that greatest master of revolutionary action, teaches us, theory gives those engaged in practical work the power of orientation, clarity of vision, assurance in work, belief in the triumph of our cause.

But real revolutionary theory is irreconcilably hostile to all emasculated theorizing, all barren play with abstract definitions. *Our theory is not a dogma, but a guide to action*, Lenin used to say. It is *such* a theory that our cadres need, and they need it as badly as they need their daily bread, as they need air or water.

Whoever really wishes to rid our work of deadening, cut-and-dried schemes, of pernicious scholasticism, must burn them out with a red-hot iron, both by *practical*, active struggle waged together with and at the head of the masses, and by *untiring effort* to master the mighty, fertile, all-powerful teaching of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin. (*Applause.*)

In this connection I consider it particularly necessary to draw your attention to the work of our *Party schools*. It is not pedants, moralizers or adepts at quoting that our schools must train. No! It is practical front-rank fighters in the cause of the working class that must leave their walls—people who are front-rank fighters not only because of their boldness and readiness for self-sacrifice, but also because they see further than rank-and-file workers and know better than they the path that leads to the emancipation of the working people. All sections of the Communist International must without any dilly-dallying seriously take up the question of the proper organization of Party schools, in order to turn them into *smithies* where these fighting cadres are forged.

¹ V. I. Lenin, "What is to be Done?" *Selected Works*, Vol. II.

The principal task of our Party schools, it seems to me, is to teach the Party and Young Communist League members there how to apply the Marxist-Leninist method to the concrete situation in particular countries, to definite conditions, not to the struggle against an enemy "in general" but against a particular, definite enemy. This makes necessary a study of not merely the letter of Leninism, but its living, revolutionary spirit.

There are two ways of training cadres in our Party schools:

First method: teaching people abstract theory, trying to give them the greatest possible dose of dry learning, coaching them how to write theses and resolutions in literary style, and only incidentally touching upon the problems of the particular country, of the particular labour movement, its history and traditions, and the experience of the Communist Party in question. Only incidentally!

Second method: theoretical training in which mastering the fundamental principles of Marxism-Leninism is based on a practical study by the student of the key problems of the struggle of the proletariat in his own country. On returning to his practical work, the student will then be able to find his bearings independently, and *become an independent practical organizer and leader capable of leading the masses in battle against the class enemy.*

Not all graduates of our Party schools prove to be suitable. There are many phrases, abstractions, a good deal of book knowledge and show of learning. But we need real, truly Bolshevik organizers and leaders of the masses. And we need them badly this very day. It does not matter if such students cannot write good theses (though we need that very much, too), but they must know how to organize and lead, undaunted by difficulties, capable of surmounting them.

Revolutionary theory is the generalized, *summarized experience* of the revolutionary movement. Communists must carefully utilize in their countries not only the experience of the past but also the experience of the present struggle of other detachments of the international labour movement. However, correct utilization of experience does not by any means denote *mechanical transposition* of readymade forms and methods of struggle from one set of conditions to another, from one country to another, as so often happens in our Parties.

Bare imitation, simple copying of methods and forms of work, even of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, in countries where capitalism is still supreme, may with the best of intentions result in harm rather than good, as has so often actually been the case. It is precisely from the experience of the Russian Bolsheviks that we must learn to

apply effectually, to the specific conditions of life in each country, the *single international line*; in the struggle against capitalism we must learn pitilessly to cast aside, pillory and hold up to general ridicule all *phrasemongering, use of hackneyed formulas, pedantry and doctrinairism*.

It is necessary to learn, comrades, to learn always, at every step, in the course of the struggle, at liberty and in jail. To learn and to fight, to fight and to learn. We must be able to combine the great teaching of Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin *with Stalinist firmness* at work and in struggle, *with Stalinist irreconcilability on matters of principle* toward the class enemy and deviators from the Bolshevik line, *with Stalinist fearlessness in face of difficulties, with Stalinist revolutionary realism*. (Applause.)

*

Comrades! Never has any international congress of Communists aroused such keen interest on the part of world public opinion as we witness now in regard to our present Congress. We may say without fear of exaggeration that there is not a single serious newspaper, not a single political party, not a single more or less serious political or social leader that is not following the course of our Congress with the closest attention.

The eyes of millions of workers, peasants, small townspeople, office workers and intellectuals, of colonial peoples and oppressed nationalities are turned toward Moscow, the great capital of the *first* but not *last* state of the international proletariat. (Applause.) In this we see a confirmation of the enormous importance and urgency of the questions discussed at the Congress and of its decisions. The frenzied howling of the fascists of all countries, particularly of rabid German fascism, only confirms us in the belief that our decisions have indeed hit the mark. (Applause.)

In the dark night of bourgeois reaction and fascism in which the class enemy is endeavouring to keep the working masses of the capitalist countries, the Communist International, the international Party of the Bolsheviks, stands out like a beacon, showing all mankind the one way to emancipation from the yoke of capitalism, from fascist barbarity and the horrors of imperialist war.

The establishment of unity of action of the working class is the *decisive* stage on that road. Yes, unity of action by the organizations of the working class of every trend, the consolidation of its forces in all spheres of its activity and at all sectors of the class struggle.

The working class must achieve the *unity of its trade unions*. In

vain do some reformist trade union leaders attempt to frighten the workers with the spectre of a trade union democracy destroyed by the interference of the Communist Parties in the affairs of the united trade unions, by the existence of Communist fractions within the trade unions.

To depict us Communists as opponents of trade union democracy is sheer nonsense. We advocate and consistently uphold the right of the trade unions to decide their problems for themselves. We are even prepared to forego the creation of Communist fractions in the trade unions if that is necessary in the interests of trade union unity. We are prepared to come to an agreement about the independence of the united trade unions from all political parties. But we are decidedly opposed to any *dependence* of the trade unions on the bourgeoisie, and do not give up our basic point of view that it is impermissible for trade unions to adopt a neutral position in regard to the class struggle between the proletariat and the bourgeoisie.

The working class must strive to secure the *union* of all forces of the working-class youth and of all organizations of the anti-fascist youth, and win over that section of the working youth which has come under the demoralizing influence of fascism and other enemies of the people.

The working class must and will achieve unity of action in all fields of the labour movement. This will come about the sooner, the more firmly and resolutely we Communists and revolutionary workers of all capitalist countries apply in practice the new tactical line adopted by our Congress in relation to the most important urgent questions of the international labour movement.

We know that there are many difficulties ahead. Our path is not a smooth, asphalt road; our path is not strewn with roses. The working class will have to overcome many an obstacle, including obstacles in its own midst; it faces the task above all of reducing to naught the disruptive machinations of the reactionary elements of Social-Democracy. Many are the sacrifices that will be exacted under the hammer blows of bourgeois reaction and fascism. The revolutionary ship of the proletariat will have to steer its course through a multitude of submerged rocks before it reaches its port.

But the working class in the capitalist countries is today no longer what it was in 1914, at the beginning of the imperialist war, nor what it was in 1918, at the end of the war. The working class has behind it twenty years of rich experience and revolutionary trials, bitter lessons of a number of defeats, especially in Germany, Austria and Spain.

The working class has before it the inspiring example of the Soviet Union, the country of socialism victorious, an example of how the class enemy can be defeated, how the working class can establish its own government and build socialist society.

The bourgeoisie no longer holds *undivided* dominion over the whole expanse of the world. Now *the victorious working class* rules over one-sixth of the globe, and Soviets control a vast stretch of territory in the great land of China.

The working class possesses a firm, well-knit revolutionary vanguard, the Communist International. It has a tried and recognized, a great and wise leader—*Stalin*. (*Storm of applause; all rise. Cheers and shouts of greeting from all delegations.*)

The whole course of historical development, comrades, favours the cause of the working class. In vain are the efforts of the reactionaries, the fascists of every hue, the entire world bourgeoisie, to turn back the wheel of history. No, that wheel is turning forward and will continue to turn forward towards a worldwide Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, until the final victory of socialism throughout the world. (*Loud, prolonged applause.*)

There is but one thing that the working class of the capitalist countries still lacks—unity in its own ranks.

So let the battle cry of the Communist International, the clarion call of Marx and Engels, Lenin and Stalin, ring out all the more loudly from this platform to the whole world:

Workers of all countries, unite!

(*Loud, prolonged applause. The vast hall resounds to shouts of "Hurrah!" "Red Front!" "Banzai!" All rise and sing the "Internationale." The German delegation offers a triple "Red Front!" Shouts of "Long live Comrade Stalin!" "Long live Comrade Dimitrov!" are heard in many languages. The delegations of the various countries in turn sing their songs of struggle. When the ovation subsides for a moment, Comrade Manuilsky exclaims:*

"Long live the faithful and tested companion-in-arms of the great Stalin; long live the helmsman of the Communist International, Comrade Dimitrov!"

Renewed enthusiastic applause and cheering, culminating in an ovation lasting fifteen to twenty minutes.)

THIRTY-FOURTH SITTING

(August 13, 1935)

REPORT ON THE PREPARATIONS FOR IMPERIALIST WAR AND THE TASKS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

Presiding: M. Thorez

THOREZ: I declare the session open. Comrade Ercoli has the floor for the report on the third point of the agenda: "The Preparations for Imperialist War and the Tasks of the Communist International."

(The whole Congress greets Comrade Ercoli's appearance on the platform with thunderous applause. All rise and give him an ovation. The chairman, Comrade Thorez, cries: "Long live Comrade Ercoli, the leader of the Italian proletariat, one of the best leaders of the Comintern!" Applause.)

Report by Comrade Ercoli

THE PREPARATIONS FOR IMPERIALIST WAR AND THE TASKS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

ERCOLI: Comrades, the problems of war and the struggle against war have always been in the centre of attention of the Communist International and of the work of our Parties. "Remember the imperialist war" declares the first appeal which our International issued to the working people of the whole world. This call for a struggle against war was later on stressed by our Fifth World Congress, and was again taken up with renewed vigour in and after 1927, when all the objective conditions for the outbreak of a new imperialist world war had matured and the capitalist world began to drift into this new war. From then

on we have regarded the danger of a new war as an imminent danger, we have appealed to the proletariat and the masses to fight against this danger, and we have rendered every possible support to any mass movement which developed on the basis of a genuine struggle against imperialist war.

As in all other spheres, the forecast made on the basis of a Marxist-Leninist analysis of the mutual relations in the capitalist world has been confirmed by the course of events. And who would venture to doubt now that if we did succeed in delaying the outbreak of war, if we did succeed in averting the attack on the Soviet Union which certain big imperialist powers (not without the benevolent aid of some of the leaders of international Social-Democracy) had prepared for 1930-31, this has been due also to the fact that we sounded the alarm and that a considerable section of the working class heard our appeal and responded to it?

In 1928 the Sixth World Congress worked out the general policy for our struggle against war. This policy, which has already passed through its "baptism of fire," remains our basic policy. But profound changes have taken place in the international situation since the Sixth World Congress, and particularly during the last few years. A new repartition of the world by means of armed force has begun in the Far East. The mutual relations between the Soviet Union and the capitalist world have entered into a new phase, as the result of the victory which socialism has achieved in this country, the country of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

New possibilities have opened up for the peace policy of the Soviet Union. The connection between the peace policy of the Soviet Union and the struggle of the workers, and of the working people in general, for peace is becoming more evident than ever before. At the same time, fascism has gained the upper hand in Germany and in a number of other countries, and the war danger has become so intense that the most strenuous efforts of the Communist vanguard and of the working class are required to muster all the forces which can be mobilized for the struggle against the instigators of war, for the defence of peace and of the Soviet Union. Hence, the necessity arises that we modify our tactics in this field as well, taking into account the changes which have taken place in the situation and in the relation of forces.

Comrade Lenin repeatedly warned us, persistently drawing our attention and the attention of all the workers to the difficulties of the struggle against war. There is no such thing as "war in general," but there are concrete wars, the character of which is determined by the

given historical period and by the alignment of class forces obtaining in the world as a whole and in the belligerent countries in particular. This is why I consider that the task of our Congress, in its study of the problems of war and of combating war, is not to repeat what was said and accomplished by the Sixth World Congress, but to examine and analyze minutely all the new factors which have now arisen in the international situation, in the sphere of relations between classes and between states, and which influence the character of the war which threatens us, and to draw from this analysis all the conclusions necessary for determining our tasks and establishing the prospects before us.

I. THE UNEVEN DEVELOPMENT OF CAPITALISM IN THE YEARS OF THE CRISIS

The End of the Versailles and Washington Systems

There has never been and there cannot be stability in the relations between the big capitalist powers. The law of the uneven development of capitalism renders this impossible.

Comrade Stalin, in his concluding speech at the Seventh Plenum of the E.C.C.I., gave a thorough definition of this law of the uneven development of capitalism and how it manifests itself:

“... For the very reason,” he said, “that the backward countries are accelerating their development and are attaining the level of the advanced countries—for this very reason the struggle waged by some countries to outstrip the others becomes more acute, for this very reason the *possibility arises* for some countries to surpass others and to drive them from the markets, thereby creating the preconditions for armed conflicts, for weakening the world front of capitalism, for a breach of this front by the proletarians of various capitalist countries.”

The period of the world economic crisis and of the depression of a special kind is an outstanding example of uneven development and reveals to us the consequences of this unevenness in the development of capitalism in all spheres.

The leading imperialist powers which emerged victoriously from the World War boasted that by the Versailles and Washington Treaties they had created lasting stability in international relations, and an immutable order both on a European and a world scale. This did not

prove to be the case. The fundamental points underlying the Versailles Treaty were:

1. To keep the defeated countries, especially Germany, in a state of political inferiority, and an object of spoliation by the victor states.

2. To reach an agreement between the victor states on the division of the spoils of war, the fixing of the frontiers of Europe and the distribution of colonies and colonial mandates for the purpose of securing the hegemony of the victor states throughout the world.

3. To prepare an economic blockade and counter-revolutionary military intervention against the country of the dictatorship of the proletariat.

The Washington Treaty in turn established the alignment of forces between the big naval powers, especially in the Pacific Ocean; the treaty regarded the huge territory of China as an immediate field of expansion for the big imperialist brigands and strove to restrict the bitter competition and struggle among them in connection with the conquest and plunder of this territory.

From the very outset it proved impossible to realize a large part of the clauses of these treaties. The plans for surrounding and attacking the Soviet Republic were shattered by the heroic struggle of the Soviet workers and peasants and by the victory which they gained in the Civil War, under the leadership of Lenin and Stalin and with the active support of the international proletariat.

It is important to note, however, that the contradictions between the very victor powers that had imposed the post-war treaties on the vanquished countries had become more acute; they were in mutual rivalry, and this rivalry was bound ultimately to smash up the whole system established by these post-war treaties.

When the crisis began, the unevenness of the development of capitalism was still further accentuated. We began to observe spasmodic breaks and jumps. The countries which had experienced the most rapid development and greatest prosperity were the first to be caught in the throes of the crisis and experienced its most severe effects. In other countries, as for instance in France last year, the level of production began to decline when the greater part of the capitalist world was already beginning to register an upward trend. This causes ever new instability in the balance of power, while the development of international relations acquires a feverish character which becomes accentuated year by year as the crisis develops.

Within each country, the results of the crisis and the methods used by the ruling classes to find a way out of the crisis and to shift the

cost of the crisis onto the shoulders of the working people are of such a character as to enhance the aggressiveness of the imperialist bourgeoisie and create ever greater tension in international relations. The enormous increase in unemployment, the reduction of wages, the impoverishment of the toiling peasantry, the declining standard of living of all the working people, coupled with an extreme contraction of the home market in each country, give rise to a keen struggle for foreign markets and render rivalry on the world market acute to the extreme. On the other hand, the growth of the concentration of capital and of monopolies (which in all countries is also speeded up by the crisis) helps to enhance the imperialist aggressiveness of the bourgeoisie. In every country, the most reactionary elements of the bourgeoisie orientate themselves on war. These elements regard war as the best means, and, under given circumstances, as the sole means, of overcoming the difficulties caused by the crisis.

The following statement, unprecedented in its frankness and cynicism, was published some months ago in a Swedish magazine:

“War today is in no way different from what it was formerly. It will increase the demand for tonnage, the risks of transport will grow, the prices of goods will also rise, profiteering will again become rife. . . . If, on the contrary, war does not come, the world will still have to wait for a long time for the situation to improve naturally, because this is still very far off.”

This cynicism, in which we read the irrevocable condemnation of a system of society which places its hopes on destruction, death and war, is highly characteristic of the state of mind created among the bourgeoisie by the crisis.

In the sphere of international economic relations the most characteristic feature of the crisis is the shrinkage of trade, which is not being ameliorated but, on the contrary, is becoming more pronounced in the years of depression. This shrinkage of world trade is to a considerable extent the result of the tariff barriers which each country erects at its frontiers to protect its shrunken and exhausted home market. The crisis has done away with the system of free trade for good and all. Each capitalist has now only one aim, that of selling at the highest possible price to the working people of his own country, who are impoverished by the crisis, and to secure for himself an extra margin of profit so as to sell on foreign markets at the lowest possible price, in order to outdo his competitors.

The plans for the organization of production on the basis of so-

called autarky are only a deceptive mask for the increased economic aggressiveness of the bourgeoisie in each country. Dumping is becoming the rule for all the big capitalist countries. This leads to the violation of all the existing commercial treaties, and the struggle for the conclusion of new treaties develops in an atmosphere of tension and of actual economic war. To avoid bankruptcy, the small countries are compelled to submit to the conditions imposed on them by the stronger countries. The biggest capitalist states, Great Britain and the United States, were the first to resort to the devaluation of their currencies as a means of strengthening their position on the world market and beating their opponents. Currency chaos, only to be compared with that of the worst years immediately following the war, deprives international economic relations of all stability, changes the traditional appearance of the markets, artificially creates new trends of commerce, destroys the most firmly established positions and brings about the most unexpected changes. Thus, a state of actual economic war, the prelude to and preparation for a war with armed forces, is being created throughout the world.

Let us take, as a concrete example, the economic development of Japan, which is the most striking in this sphere. The rate at which the commercial expansion of Japan has proceeded during recent years has no precedent in the history of the commerce of capitalist countries. Japanese trade has secured particularly strong positions in the western part of the Pacific Ocean. Japanese exports to these countries, which amounted to 367,000,000 yen in 1931, rose to 684,000,000 in 1933. During the same period, the exports of the U.S.A. to the same markets fell from \$341,000,000 to \$262,000,000, and those of Great Britain from £30,000,000 to £24,000,000. In the Dutch Indies, Japanese trade has beaten all competitors and has taken first place. The textile market in Indonesia was captured by the Japanese in record time. Japanese goods have rapidly penetrated into the markets of the Near East, ousting those of Great Britain, Italy and other countries. In China, imports from Japan, which fell as a result of the boycott of Japanese goods by the people during the period of the revolutionary upsurge, have in the recent past again begun to develop rapidly, owing to the support of the Nanking government. The increase of Japanese exports to Central and South America is particularly striking.

Japanese export to the colonial and dependent countries is larger than that of any other country. Moreover, and this is particularly important, the proportion of exports taken by colonies belonging to other countries is greater in the case of Japan than in that of any other

country. Thus, Japan has driven Great Britain from the position which she has so long occupied as the biggest exporter of textile goods in the world.

Penetrating into the colonies and spheres of influence of other countries with her trade, Japan intensifies her contradictions with all the other imperialist countries. The bourgeoisies of these countries have resorted to special measures to protect their markets and the markets of their colonies from Japanese goods. The Japanese bourgeoisie retaliates to these measures by increasing its dumping and contraband. Thus the deck is being cleared for an open economic war.

This tremendous economic expansion of Japan is revealed to us in its true light only if we take into consideration the class nature of Japanese dumping, which is based on the miserable wages of the working men and women of Japan and on the unprecedented impoverishment of the mass of the Japanese peasantry. Objectively, Japanese imperialist aggression and the policy of war provocation pursued by the Japanese military clique, have their roots in a class policy based on the misery and starvation of the masses of the people in the country.

The drastic change which has taken place, under the blows of the crisis, in the economic relations between the dominant imperialist countries has thus been the immediate cause of the undermining and wrecking of the post-war treaties. Under the pressure of British imperialism, which at a definite period was interested in the economic and political rise of Germany, France has become "convinced" of the necessity of refraining from the use of force to extort the billions of reparation payments from the German people. Nevertheless, in 1931, at the height of the crisis, the former allies still considered it possible to demand from Germany the payment of the huge sum of 2,500,000,000 marks per year for a period of 62 years. It was the interference of the United States, compelled thereto by the crisis, that resulted in the complete collapse of this part of the Versailles Treaty.

When the fascists came to power in Germany at the beginning of 1933, three-quarters of the Versailles system had already been rendered ineffective. The so-called unilateral acts which have resulted in its further liquidation were equally the result of a covert but desperate struggle between the big imperialist powers. These acts include the refusal of the Hitler government to fulfil the obligations arising under the Young Plan, the reintroduction of compulsory military service for the entire German people and the creation of a new and powerful German army, navy and air fleet.

At the present time all that is left of the Versailles system is the

post-war frontiers in Europe and the partition of the colonies and the colonial mandates. That is to say, nothing remains except that which can be abolished only by the direct use of arms, only by means of violence and war. On the other hand, nothing remains of the Washington Treaty either. The sections of this treaty which established the ratio between the big naval powers have been denounced and have given place to a mad race in naval armaments. The armies of the Japanese imperialists, which occupied Manchuria and North China without the slightest heed to protests from Geneva and from the pacifists, and which are now continuing their onslaught with the intention of occupying all Chinese territory, have trampled under foot the last traces of the Washington agreements.

Comrades, the Communist International and the Communist Parties of the various countries concerned have been in the forefront of the fight against the predatory post-war treaties. We have no tears to shed over the collapse of the hateful system of oppression and plunder which was established at Versailles. On May 13, 1919, in a manifesto to the working people of the whole world, the Executive Committee of the newly-formed Communist International denounced the Versailles peace as a predatory peace. We formulated this unequivocal condemnation at the time when the leaders of international Social-Democracy were affixing their signatures to the Versailles Treaty and were praising it as an act of justice, as the beginning of a new era of international collaboration and "the organization of peace throughout the world."

We do not have to withdraw a single word of our condemnation of the Versailles Treaty. But at the present moment, when the collapse and end of the Versailles Treaty is one of the vital factors characterizing the present situation, it is our duty to face squarely the *new situation* confronting the international proletariat and to determine our tasks and the tasks of the proletariat in the light of this new situation. This is still not understood by everyone, especially by certain groups of pacifists, for whom the struggle against the Versailles Treaty becomes at times a pretext for closing their eyes to the aggressive policy and war provocation of German National-Socialism and for deflecting the attention of the working people from the necessity of concentrating their efforts on the struggle against the chief instigators of a new imperialist war.

We Communists have been the only ones to wage a consistent struggle for the abolition of the Versailles Treaty. But we have always carried on this struggle as a struggle for the social and national demands of the masses and for revolution.

"Our struggle against the Versailles system," declared Comrade Thaelmann at the historic meeting in Paris on October 31, 1932, "has nothing in common with the imperialist demands and nationalist propaganda of the German bourgeoisie and the National-Socialists. . . . We want to destroy both the national oppression established by the Versailles Treaty and the social oppression of the working people which the system of capitalist profit entails. . . . Our fight against the Versailles Treaty is a fight for wages and bread, a fight for liberty, a fight for socialism."

Comrades, we fought for the abolition of the post-war treaties along the lines of social and national emancipation. That which has taken place has nothing in common with the aims for which we struggled. The post-war treaties were tattered to pieces by the desperate rivalries between the imperialists. The situation which has ensued spells the eve of a new world war which German imperialism intends to wage in order to impose upon the peoples a "peace" after the fashion of that demonstrated by the Prussian generals at Brest-Litovsk. It is this menace, which today is the most serious, that we take as our starting point in deciding our position in the struggle against imperialism and war.

The end of the Versailles and Washington systems signifies the bankruptcy of hypocritical bourgeois pacifism; it signifies the maximum degree of instability in international relations; it denotes the transition to the use of force in adjusting all acute questions, all conflicts occurring in all parts of the world; it marks a turning point in the headlong armaments race. A new imperialist war for the redivision of the world is not only inevitable, is not only being minutely prepared by every imperialist power, but may break out and take us by surprise at any moment.

II. THE STRENGTH OF THE SOVIET UNION, THE JAPANESE PLANS OF AGGRESSION AND THE DRIVE OF FASCISM

Comrades, the capitalist world is rushing headlong towards a new war. The task we set ourselves is to determine concretely whence the war danger threatens today, who are the present instigators of war, what kind of war it is that they want to kindle and are already preparing. To answer these questions we must concentrate our attention on the following three fundamental facts:

- 1) The powerful rise of the Soviet Union.
- 2) The attack of the Japanese military clique in the Far East.
- 3) The drive of fascism in Europe and especially in Germany.

The Powerful Rise of the Soviet Union

The development of the forces of revolution has always been one of the factors having the greatest influence on international interrelations. But the present rise of the Soviet Union is a fact of a new order, and its historic importance is far beyond anything known in previous history. It is a fact which is already breaking the framework of the old capitalist world, a fact which overthrows all existing interrelations and determines a new line of development of the whole international situation.

The Soviet Union, which has become stronger in every aspect, both within its borders and in its relations with foreign countries, is the only stable, reliable and solid force which can serve as a bulwark in defence of peace. This consolidation of the international position of the Soviet Union is the direct result of the strengthening of the position both of the dictatorship of the proletariat and of socialism in all spheres of the life of the country.

In 1918-20 the armies of intervention which were hurled against the Land of Soviets by the Entente Powers had on their side also the forces of the Russian capitalists and landlords whom the October Revolution had driven from power. In some cases the imperialist forces of the interventionists restricted themselves merely to recruiting and arming cadres and to directing the attacks made on the young Soviet Republic by the reactionary classes, which had not yet been completely routed. In 1930-32 the trial of the Industrial Party brought to light that the imperialist powers, in organizing intervention against the Soviet Union, were relying on the support of a counter-revolutionary organization which embraced all the elements hostile to the dictatorship of the proletariat within the country.

The changes in the alignment of forces which have taken place in the Soviet Union in recent years, and which are an expression of the final and irrevocable victory of socialism over capitalism, have dealt a death blow to these criminal plans of attack against the Soviet Union. These changes have deprived the armies of the counter-revolutionary intervention of any possibility of support within the U.S.S.R. from classes hostile to the dictatorship of the proletariat.

But this increased class homogeneity in the population of the Soviet Union is not the only thing we must take into consideration. It is not merely the fact that the proletarians and collective farmers of the Soviet Union confront the capitalist countries as a compact army of builders of a new, a socialist society, ready to defend the

gains of the revolution by every means and at the cost of their lives. The technical equipment of the Soviet country, which is the result of the successful completion of the First Five-Year Plan and the fulfilment of the first half of the Second Five-Year Plan, permits them to regard the prospect of a possible attack by the imperialist countries with full confidence in their own forces. A few figures will quite suffice to characterize the development of heavy industry in the Soviet Union.

The share of the former tsarist empire in world production of pig iron in 1913 was only 5.3 per cent. The share of the Soviet Union in 1928 was only 3.7 per cent, while at the end of 1934 it was already 16.7 per cent. (*Applause.*) At the end of 1934, the Soviet Union ranked second in the production of pig iron, coming after the United States but ahead of Great Britain and Germany. (*Applause.*) As for steel, the corresponding figures are 5.5 per cent in 1913, 3.9 per cent in 1928 and 11.7 per cent in 1934. (*Applause.*)

Nothing can serve better than these figures to emphasize the tremendous historic importance of the policy of the C.P.S.U.(B.), which, under the leadership of Comrade Stalin, has ensured the successful completion of the Five-Year Plan and has thus created the basis for a radical change in the relation of forces between the Soviet Union and the capitalist countries. From the standpoint of the military strength and defensive capacity of the Soviet Union, this means that the country of the dictatorship of the proletariat already has an armed force and a capacity for defence which are in no way inferior to those of any capitalist country. The armies of workers and peasants, which in the heroic years of the Civil War were still only armies in the process of formation, overcoming the difficulties of the period of transition from Red Guard detachments—full of enthusiasm but with hardly any discipline and poorly armed—to a regular, centralized, disciplined and modernly equipped army, now form the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army, which has been completely reorganized thanks to the up-to-date technique and industrial development of the country.

"The Red Army has been transformed from a backward army into a modern, up-to-date army. It has in industry a basis of production which can manufacture all modern implements of war." (*Voroshilov, Lenin, Stalin and the Red Army.*)

In the Far East, where the direct menace of an imperialist attack is greater, the frontiers of the Soviet Union have too ceased to be defenceless frontiers. They are defended by an army which has at its

disposal its own military-economic base and its own highly developed war industry. (*Applause.*)

This amazing rise of the economic and military might of the Soviet Union is accompanied by a continual growth in the sympathy for and devotion to the workers' state by the proletariat and the wide masses of the people throughout the capitalist world.

The tremendous prestige of the Soviet Union not only among the Communist vanguard, but also among Social-Democratic and non-Party workers, among the small farmers, the lower middle classes, the intellectuals and the youth, the fact that millions of people are ready to fight staunchly in defence of the Soviet Union, are among the very important factors which contribute to making the country of the dictatorship of the proletariat so strong in comparison with the capitalist states.

Taking all these factors into consideration, the conclusion we must reach is that the relations between the Soviet Union and the capitalist states have entered a new phase, the basic feature of which is the growing prestige of the country of the dictatorship of the proletariat and its peace policy.

We find repercussions of this new factor in all spheres of international politics, and we must take careful note of it in determining our policy.

The Aggression of Japanese Imperialism in the Far East

Let us now cast a glance at what is taking place in the capitalist world.

Japan, undoubtedly, is the most aggressive imperialist power—a power that is feverishly preparing for war, and is already waging war. Since 1931 bellicose Japanese imperialism has set about changing the map of the world by armed force. After the seizure of Manchuria by armed force, Japanese imperialism proceeded to occupy Northern China; it has openly revealed its intention of establishing a protectorate over all China, and is now preparing to continue its further advance towards the centre of China.

The aim pursued by imperialist Japan and openly avowed by its statesmen is to secure hegemony not merely in the Far East, but in all Eastern Asia and along the Western shores of the Pacific Ocean. To attain this goal, Japan must, first of all, create a raw material base for her heavy industry.

The set purpose of the Japanese militarists in seizing Manchuria

and Northern China was to acquire a base for attacking the Soviet frontiers and to secure a spacious hinterland for the armies which are to conduct this attack. However, the relation of forces in the Far East today is such that a war against the Soviet Union becomes no easy matter for Japan, and even a section of the Japanese generals themselves are not over-confident in its possible outcome. But on the other hand, the growing might of the Soviet Union and of the Red Army impels the most aggressive Japanese militarists to declare against any postponement of the war, to declare that every opportunity must be utilized forthwith and that allies must be found with whose help it would be possible to begin the war at once without any further delay.

Here is what we read in a pamphlet on the notorious "Defence of the State," published by the Press Bureau of the Japanese General Staff in October 1934:

"All this [that is, considerations of the growing military might of the Soviet Union] obliges us to reflect on the nature of the intentions of the U.S.S.R. If the Japanese Empire does not immediately increase its armaments as a counterpoise to the powerful Red Army, and if in particular it does not strengthen its air forces, it will be very difficult for it to do so tomorrow.

"And it is superfluous to stress the necessity of increasing the forces now in Manchukuo."

This tendency to aggravate the situation in the Far East dominates the whole of Japanese policy; it has been manifested in the refusal to conclude a non-aggression pact with the Soviet Union; in the intrigues by which Japanese diplomacy links itself with the instigators of war and the enemies of the Soviet Union in Europe; in the increased war preparations now being carried out by the Japanese generals in Manchuria; in the feverish construction in the latter region of new railway lines and strategic roads; in efforts to create an autonomous industrial base for the Japanese army on the continent of Asia, in Manchuria; in the constant provocations on the Soviet frontiers on the part of aggressive Japanese-Manchurian circles and their repeated attempts to provoke an armed conflict with the Mongolian People's Republic.

This aggressive policy of Japan's is the result of the entire domestic and foreign situation of Japanese imperialism. It must not be forgotten, comrades, that modern Japan is a country of the deepest and sharpest class differentiation. It is a country in which the semi-

feudal oppression of the masses of starving peasants is coupled with the most hideous forms of capitalist exploitation. Preparation for war is leaving its imprint on the whole life of the country. While inflation and war orders are bringing about an increase in production and in the profits of the armament manufacturers, real wages are falling. They have dropped by 20 per cent as a result of inflation alone, and by 66 per cent for agricultural workers. The working day of a Japanese worker is as much as 14-18 hours. In the countryside there are no less than two million starving families, which means eight to ten million persons. Need one be astonished if the aggressive circles of the Japanese bourgeoisie regard as a challenge the very fact of the existence of the country of socialism, the uninterrupted growth of well-being for the masses and the freedom of the peoples in the U.S.S.R.

The policy of expansion pursued by the Japanese generals is a most reactionary class policy. Their bayonets are directed primarily and above all against the revolution, but the forces of the revolution are rallying and will fight with the utmost vigour and enthusiasm to foil their criminal designs.

Comrades, if the war which day by day for the past four years has threatened the Far Eastern frontiers of the Soviet Union has still not broken out, we owe this exclusively to the farsighted and courageous peace policy pursued by the Soviet Union. (*Applause.*) We greet this policy. And it will be quite in order if at the same time we send hearty greetings from the rostrum of this congress to the glorious Red Army standing on guard at the Far Eastern frontiers of our socialist fatherland. (*Loud and prolonged applause. The delegates rise.*)

Comrades of the Far Eastern Red Army, should the Japanese marauders take the offensive and you, in your invincible might, rise up in arms to deal them a crushing blow so as to discourage every imperialist marauder from ever attempting such a venture, rest assured that all over the world millions of working people, under the leadership of the Communist Parties, will stalwartly support your fight and help you to break the backbone of our class enemy. The Workers' and Peasants' Red Army, in alliance with the international proletariat, is a force which no one will ever be able to conquer. (*Applause.*)

The Drive of Fascism, the Principal Instigator of War

Comrades, the third new fact characterizing the present-day international situation to which I wish to draw your attention is the victory

of fascism in Germany and in a number of other countries in Europe, and the general offensive of fascism.

The drive of fascism is the arch-reactionary response of decaying capitalism to the triumph of socialism in the country of the dictatorship of the proletariat. It keeps step with the extreme intensification of the class struggle, and hence also with the extreme intensification of the danger of war. Comrade Stalin has repeatedly drawn our attention to the fact that the fascist dictatorship is one of the forms resorted to by the bourgeoisie to organize their rear for a new war. The fascist dictatorship is directly linked up with the preparations for war. The establishment of a fascist dictatorship gives the preparations for the new imperialist war a particular stamp and fixed direction. The drive of fascism is the most clearly expressed form of the capitalist world's drifting into a new world war. The victory of German National-Socialism, which is the most aggressive variety of fascism, is not merely the victory of a party based upon the most unbridled chauvinism and setting the unleashing of war as its immediate aim. It is the victory of a party which brazenly proclaims that its immediate aim is to undertake a counter-revolutionary war against the Soviet Union, the revolutionary movement of the working class and the movement for the national liberation of oppressed peoples throughout the world.

German fascism masks its war provocations by the demand for the liberation and unification of all Germans living in Europe. Actually, the task it sets itself is that of establishing its own hegemony on the European continent, and it counts on attaining this aim by heading a crusade of reaction against the Soviet Union. The aims of the foreign policy of the fascist "Third Reich" have been expressed so clearly and unambiguously that there can be no doubt about them.

"We National-Socialists," writes Hitler, "consciously put an end to the pre-war trend of foreign policy. We begin where Germany left off six hundred years ago. We stop the everlasting movement of Germans to South and West Europe and direct our gaze to the lands in the East. We finally put an end to the colonial and trade policy of the pre-war period and inaugurate the territorial policy of the future.

"But when today we speak of new territory in Europe we can have in mind only Russia and the border states subject to it."

"Fate itself indicates this path to us."

This fundamental direction of the foreign policy of National-Socialism is fully borne out by the activities of the leaders of the "Third Reich," by everything they have done since their advent to power. The stubborn refusal to sign a pact guaranteeing peace and the frontiers in Eastern Europe is not the least important manifestation of this activity. On May 21 of this year, in his last speech on German foreign policy, a speech which is the last word in hypocrisy and demagoguery, Hitler once again confirmed that the entire policy of National-Socialism is directed towards an attack against the Soviet Union. This time he advances an argument much more convincing than the references to the conquering expeditions of the mediæval Teutonic knights.

"Our moral conceptions," he said, "are diametrically opposed to those of Soviet Russia.... National-Socialism has saved Germany and, probably, Europe from the greatest catastrophe of all time.... National-Socialism cannot call upon its German fellow countrymen, the adherents of National-Socialism, to support a system which in our own country we consider our most mortal enemy."

Indeed, no contrast could be so profound as that existing between the country of the dictatorship of Hitler fascism and the country of the dictatorship of the proletariat. German fascism is the instigator of the most rabid capitalist reaction, of bloody oppression of the workers, the toiling peasants, the national minorities and the entire German people. The Soviet power means the liberty of the working class, the liberation of all working people from every form of oppression and exploitation, the right of self-determination for all peoples. The Soviet power is the champion of the liberation of all humanity. Fascist Germany is the reign of the magnates of capital and of the feudal landlords. The Soviet Union is the land of emancipated labour, of conscious discipline, of the most advanced culture and progress. German fascism, which is the instigator of the civil war of the moribund bourgeoisie against the proletariat, is likewise the instigator of war against the country of the dictatorship of the proletariat. At the bottom of the war propaganda conducted by the fascist press for the "extirpation of Bolshevism," and in line with rabid imperialist aggression, is the rabid class hatred of the most reactionary sections of the bourgeoisie for the proletariat.

The fact that, in a country with a population numerically exceeding that of any other country in capitalist Europe, a party is in power

which so sharply puts the problem of a war aiming at the destruction of the country of the victorious proletarian revolution—this fact must today occupy the centre of our attention and our work. If it is true that one of the fundamental qualities of Bolshevism, one of the fundamental features of our revolutionary strategy, is the ability to determine at each given moment who is the principal enemy and to be able to concentrate all our forces for a struggle against that enemy—then it is at the present juncture, and in relation to the present position, that we must particularly give proof of this ability. To concentrate our fire against German fascism, as the principal instigator of war and the mortal enemy of the Soviet Union and the proletarian revolution, is the duty of every revolutionary. (*Applause.*) Whoever fails to understand this duty fails to understand anything of the forms in which the struggle between reaction and revolution is developing in Europe today.

Every concession made to the aggressive policy of fascism facilitates the work of the enemies of peace and is a step forward toward the unleashing of war.

The fascists will not succeed in deceiving us by the pacifist chatter behind which they screen their policy of war. We shall not allow ourselves to be deceived by the hypocritical agitation carried on by the fascist leaders with regard to the national demands of the German population in the various countries of Europe. The National-Socialist Party, which has subjected the workers and the peasants of Germany to a barbarous regime of concentration camps, prisons and tortures, cannot be a champion of national liberation.

The national aspirations of the German population in the various countries of Europe are for the fascist leaders nothing but small change, which they cynically put into circulation in order to secure support for their plans of conquest and counter-revolutionary war. Has not Hitler himself given proof of this by sacrificing the interests of the German population of Southern Tyrol?

German fascism is attempting to create reactionary blocs, suppliant to its plans of conquest, by supporting the most reactionary parties and fascist cliques in various countries.

The first concrete act of this policy was the conclusion at the beginning of 1934 of a pact between German National-Socialism and Polish fascism. This pact is essentially different from the majority of those we have known since the war. It is a secret pact; and this return to the methods of secret diplomacy is also one of the things we owe to National-Socialism. What can be said to this by the leaders of the Labour Party, who have cherished the illusion that the end of secret

diplomacy meant the end of wars and who today in fact are indirectly facilitating the fascists' policy in Europe?

All that is known of the pact between Poland and Germany goes to show that it is a pact of aggression aimed at helping the preparations for war. There is not the slightest suggestion in it that it becomes invalid in the case of one of the signatories being the aggressor. It endeavours to coordinate somewhat Polish and German propaganda and the activities of these two countries among the bands of the Ukrainian counter-revolutionary émigrés and the counter-revolutionary West Ukrainian bourgeoisie. All this means that by affixing its signature to this pact Polish fascism has joined Germany in her plan of territorial expansion towards the East, the foul plan for the invasion and colonization of the Soviet Ukraine.

I will not dwell on the fact that the agreement between Poland and Germany is replete with contradictions, which were very strikingly demonstrated recently in connection with the Danzig question. In concluding this pact with the cliques which govern Poland, German National-Socialism has in no way renounced its anti-Polish claims; it has merely desired to recruit assistants for its criminal anti-Soviet adventure. The plan, which consists of diverting the menace of National-Socialist expansion from Poland by directing it against the Soviet Union, is a plan worthy of the reactionary adventurers who are ready to hazard even the independence of the Polish people. It is quite obvious that if German fascism were to succeed in consolidating itself in Europe with the aid of Polish fascism, and in realizing even a part of its aims of territorial conquest, the fate of the Polish people would by no means be an enviable one. A minimum of discernment suffices to foresee that the present masters of Germany can only jeopardize once more the national independence of the Polish people and subject it once again to the threat of dismemberment. And that is what Polish public opinion is more and more coming to realize.

The pact with Poland has served German National-Socialism as a starting point from which to extend its skein of intrigues. Its direct consequence has been to aggravate the menace to the frontiers of Czechoslovakia, and to the independence of Czechoslovakia, and to make German fascism more aggressive in its strivings to put an end to the independence of the Baltic countries. It has had as its consequence the extreme aggravation of the Austrian problem. Having destroyed the Franco-Polish alliance, National-Socialism is aiming at the disintegration of the Little Entente and its replacement in Central Europe by a new bloc of fascist powers, whose axis is to consist of Poland,

Hungary and Bulgaria. The German fascists are endeavouring to draw Yugoslavia also into this bloc, just as they are trying to change the orientation of the foreign policy of Rumania.

The barefaced manner in which Hitler fascism renders assistance to the development of the fascist movement in every country is a component part of this reactionary plan. Availing itself of its foreign connections in its bellicose drive, German fascism is mobilizing and inciting all the war parties throughout Europe—from England to the Balkans, from Finland to Spain, from Holland to Italy.

Thus we see ever more clearly defined in Europe a group of capitalist states, governed and directed by the most bellicose and reactionary forces, which are directly interested in the speedy outbreak of war in general, and, in particular, of a war directed against the Soviet Union. On the other hand, we can distinguish a group of capitalist countries which for the most part have preserved a parliamentary regime and which are more or less interested in the preservation of peace.

There are even prophets of reaction who have the effrontery to assert that the victory of the reactionary and fascist parties in all countries would facilitate the cause of peace, because these parties, being closest to each other in their ideology, would, so to say, be able more easily to reach an understanding.

But look at what is going on between fascist Germany and fascist Italy. Germany's broaching of the question of the annexation of Austria as the most acute question in Central Europe, the development of a National-Socialist movement and the repeated attempt at a fascist *putsch* in Austria, have created a direct menace at the frontiers of Italian imperialism. The renewal of the "Drang nach Osten" of German imperialism in fascist garb clashes with the policy of imperialist expansion of Italian fascism.

There is thus created a danger zone of conflicts which undermines all stability of relations and tranquillity in Central Europe. To assert that it is possible to base the peace of Europe and of the whole world on an entente between fascist dictatorships which have completely reduced the working people to slavery, is to lie in a most shameless fashion.

In the period immediately following the war it was customary to say that there were several particularly dangerous war zones in Europe, so-called "Balkanized" regions, where the conflagration of a war might flare up more easily than anywhere else. Today there is no longer any part of Europe which has not been "Balkanized" in this sense; there is not a corner of the Continent—that part of it which is still under

the capitalist regime—where the states are not ranged against each other, ready to pass in a few hours from the present state of unstable peace, a peace armed to the teeth and very uncertain, to a state of open war.

This is the direct consequence of the drive, victories and intrigues of fascism, particularly of German National-Socialism. Each forward step made by fascism and the war parties of the bourgeoisie can only hasten the moment when the capitalist world will be plunged into the abyss of war.

There is one more argument, comrades, and by no means a secondary one for those who ask us why the defence of democratic liberties is the central point of our united front and People's Front policy. We cannot remain indifferent when we observe the rise of a state system directed by the most bellicose and chauvinist groups of the bourgeoisie, the growth of the extremist war parties throughout the world, and the tendency towards the formation of a bloc of a number of fascist countries for a war against the Soviet Union. In this connection, our task does not consist merely in passively registering events, but in making politics, that is to say, interfering in these events so as to change their course or, at least, to delay the outbreak of war.

Can one not foresee what a victorious war waged by German fascism would hold in store for Europe? Such a war would mean the end of national independence for the Czechs, the Lithuanians and other small nationalities in the Baltic states, as well as for the Poles, Dutch and Belgians. All the peoples of Europe understand this, and this is verified by the enthusiasm with which these peoples, whose national independence is threatened by National-Socialism, welcome the ever more active and authoritative participation of the Soviet Union in European politics, because the activity of the U.S.S.R. in the field of foreign policy bars the road to the offensive of the German fascists.

In concentrating our fire against the principal enemy of peace, against German fascism—which, of course, does not prevent us from waging an irreconcilable struggle against the imperialism of our "own" countries and against the extreme war parties of the capitalist countries linked with German fascism—we only do our duty as the staunch defenders of all the liberties and conquests of the working class and the working people, our duty in defence of national freedom.

III. THE POSITION OF THE BIG IMPERIALIST POWERS

What is the policy of the big imperialist powers in the face of the growth of bellicose German fascism and Japanese militarism?

It is essential to bear in mind that war against the Soviet Union is not the sole aim of German National-Socialism and Japanese militarism. They are fighting for their own hegemony. Their attack upon the Soviet Union is only a component part of a general plan of expansion and of conquest. These plans, which aim at a new repartition of the world, clash with the whole complex of existing interests and still further intensify the antagonisms among the imperialists, not only in Europe but throughout the world.

Japan's annexation of Manchuria and her aggressive activity aimed at the conquest of the whole of China intensify imperialist rivalries throughout the Pacific Ocean. Both England and the United States are directly affected by this onslaught of Japan against China. The antagonisms between Great Britain and the United States are the most profound of all that rend the imperialist world, because they manifest themselves on a world scale, because these two countries encounter one another in every part of the world, and because the goal towards which American imperialism inevitably strives is the undermining of British colonial and maritime supremacy. But the military power of the United States and its strategic position in the Pacific Ocean do not yet correspond to its economic strength and its development, despite the tremendous growth of its armaments during the past few years.

Thus we are confronted here by an imperialist state which does not set itself *immediate aims* of conquest. I emphasize—*immediate aims of conquest*, but which is interested in gaining time, in postponing an armed conflict as long as possible, and in employing the time thus gained to strengthen its own positions. We witness a number of measures undertaken by the United States to steadily strengthen its position in the Pacific Ocean. These measures can be seen in the reinforcement of the already formidable military-naval bases and in the establishment of new bases, both naval and air, in the Western Pacific, the Aleutian Islands, Alaska, etc. All these measures are a reply to those taken by Japan, who is endeavouring to win positions that would open for her the road to Southern Asia and the Indian Ocean. The armament race and the struggle for the strategic preparation for war are in full swing in the Far East and the whole Pacific Ocean.

The position adopted by Great Britain is very different from that of the United States. British policy cannot be understood if one confines oneself to emphasizing the contrast between the countries that were late in entering the struggle of imperialist rivalries and the countries that have already managed to secure colonial possessions, drawing the hasty conclusion that the former countries want war and the latter peace.

The matter is not so simple. Britain, which undoubtedly possesses the greatest colonial empire, does not pursue a policy of peace at all.

In the first place, the defence of an empire extending to every continent requires that Britain react to conflicts that break out or are brewing even in the most remote places and regions. Its policy is full of contradictions, and these contradictions in their turn become the source of the instability of its position, the cause of new conflicts.

In the second place, the British bourgeoisie are the prime instigators in suppressing the liberation movements of the colonial peoples, just as the German fascists are the prime instigators in establishing the open dictatorship of the bourgeoisie over the working class.

As early as 1848 Karl Marx thus defined the role of Britain with regard to the development of the revolution in Europe:

“As in the epoch of Napoleon, England will head the counter-revolutionary armies, but as a result of the war itself it will be impelled to the head of the revolutionary movement, and pay its debt towards the revolution of the 18th century.” (Karl Marx, article in the *Neue Rheinische Zeitung*, January 1, 1849.)

The necessity to wage a struggle in order to maintain its colonial domination, a struggle against revolution and against the national-liberation movements, remains today, too, the principal mainspring of British policy. The demand for such a struggle is advanced particularly by the most reactionary groups of the bourgeoisie. The attitude of British imperialism towards German National-Socialism cannot be otherwise explained. Of late Great Britain has repeatedly given its support to Nazi Germany against the forces that have endeavoured and continue to endeavour to oppose the latter's war policy. It is with the open or masked support of Britain, and even with her encouragement, that National-Socialism has again brought into being an imperialist mass army in Germany. Britain legitimized the arming of imperialist Germany by recently concluding with her a naval agreement which sanctioned the annulment of the war clauses of the Versailles Treaty, an agreement which gave the signal for a new race in the building of war fleets in Europe and, at the same time, created a new instrument of aggression in the Baltic, at the gates of the Soviet Union.

If we bear in mind that the war of 1914-18 was due largely to the conflict between British imperialism and German imperialism, and that the expansion of National-Socialism takes place in all directions, that it is demanding for itself a new colonial empire and hegemony in

Europe, then it is clear that the problem will crop up again just as in 1914-18, but this time in a much sharper fashion. It is easy to understand that the support given to German fascism by die-hard circles of the British bourgeoisie is nothing else than support—direct or indirect—given to the preparation for war against the Soviet Union. British imperialism, and in particular the most reactionary section of the British bourgeoisie (here, too, we must treat the question relatively), considers it its “historical” mission to deal a mortal blow to the country of socialism, or at least to weaken the Soviet Union for a long time to come by a series of wars in Europe and in the Far East. Finally, the attitude of Poland, in which British imperialism undoubtedly plays an outstanding role, confirms this statement.

Here we have a classic example of the constant tendency of the imperialist countries to solve their contradictions by organizing intervention against the U.S.S.R. The reactionary British bourgeoisie presumes it can direct the drive of German and Japanese imperialism that menaces its own positions into anti-Soviet channels. But in actual fact the international situation today is so complicated, the different war centres are so closely bound up with one another that any scheme of “localizing” an imperialist war, or of limiting the war plans of German fascism and Japanese imperialism, is a sheer utopia. The British bourgeoisie, by the concessions and support it gives to the instigators of war in Europe and the Far East, accelerates the onset of a new world war into which the British Empire will also be inevitably drawn.

A different role is now played by France. The French bourgeoisie is still sane enough not to forget that in the gospel of Hitlerism France is depicted as the traditional enemy of German imperialism in Europe. It is still sane enough to understand that every step taken by German National-Socialism towards the conquest of hegemony in Europe must inevitably place in jeopardy the security of France and the very integrity of French territory. That is why the French bourgeoisie is particularly conscious of the indivisibility of peace at the present time and is interested in the defence of the *status quo*, which can only mean defence of peace and opposition to German fascism's unbounded plans of aggression.

No one, of course, cherishes excessive illusions regarding the consistency of the French bourgeoisie in this policy of peace. The position of French imperialism is also full of contradictions, and the latter manifest themselves both within the country and internationally. A considerable section of the French bourgeoisie have long cherished plans for coming to an understanding with German imperialism. These

are the plans of the most reactionary section of the bourgeoisie, of Tardieu, the Fiery Cross, the church, and the reactionary elements that are attempting to fascize the army. In making this statement we must at the same time emphasize the fact that the present policy of the French bourgeoisie is nothing but the expression of class relations within the country, in particular of the pressure of the mass of the French people, who do not want to permit anti-Soviet agreements with Hitler, because they hate the Hitler regime and place their hope in the country of the dictatorship of the proletariat. That is why the united front and People's Front policy of our French Communist Party is a guarantee of peace, not only for France, but for the working people of the whole world. (*Applause.*)

Let us draw a few conclusions from this cursory analysis of the mutual relations of the big imperialist powers:

1. The contrast between the capitalist world and the world of socialism continues to be the deepest contradiction of the present historical period.

2. This contradiction is expressed today especially sharply by the fact that the imperialists of two of the largest countries, Germany and Japan, are openly calling for war against the Soviet Union, are trying to create a bloc of a number of reactionary and fascist states to prepare and wage this war, and are supported and encouraged in these efforts by the most reactionary section of the bourgeoisie of one of the biggest imperialist countries—Great Britain.

3. The policy of aggression of German fascism and Japanese militarism leads inevitably to a new accentuation of all international antagonisms, but at the same time to a differentiation in the policy of the great imperialist powers, some of which are interested in the defence of the *status quo* and in a temporary and conditional defence of peace.

It follows from all this, comrades, that the international situation is particularly tense and acute, that war may break out at any moment and at any place, and that any war will inevitably become a world war. It likewise follows from all this that the antagonisms among the big imperialist powers are developing in such a way that at a given moment, under given conditions, they may to a certain extent form an obstacle to the creation of a new bloc of the powers for war against the Soviet Union. This opens considerable possibilities for the Soviet policy of peace.

If it is true that differences—such as I have just sketched—exist in the positions of the various countries then we must not fail to take

them into account in determining our revolutionary strategy and our tactics in the fight against war. This is absolutely essential.

Let me remind you with what exceptional clarity Lenin theoretically substantiated the necessity of this revolutionary strategy:

"The more powerful enemy can be conquered only by exerting the utmost effort, and by *necessarily*, thoroughly, carefully, attentively and skilfully taking advantage of every (even the smallest) 'rift' among the enemies, of every antagonism of interest among the bourgeoisie of the various countries and among the various groups or types of bourgeoisie within the various countries, by taking advantage of every, even the smallest, opportunity of gaining a mass ally, even though this ally be temporary, vacillating, unstable, unreliable and conditional. Those who do not understand this, do not understand even a particle of Marxism, or of scientific, modern socialism *in general*."¹

As you see, Lenin directly says that it is obligatory to utilize all the contradictions of interests, not only among the different groups of the bourgeoisie in a single country, but also the contradictions of interests between the bourgeoisie of *different countries*. Lenin speaks here precisely of the attitude of the proletariat to the problems of international policy and war. The directive he gives is obligatory for us above all in determining the line of the foreign policy of the country of the dictatorship of the proletariat. But at the same time it is obligatory for the proletariat and for the Communist Parties of the capitalist countries, in so far as these Parties can and must elaborate a positive stand in deciding problems of international policy, to interfere actively in the course of events and aid tendencies that retard the unleashing of war and hinder everything that constitutes a direct immediate menace to peace.

At the base of our revolutionary strategy, and consequently of our struggle against war, we put the concentration of forces against the Japanese militarists who threaten an onslaught on the Soviet Union at its Eastern frontiers and who are striving to destroy the conquests of the Chinese Revolution. We concentrate our fire against German fascism—the chief instigator of war in Europe. We endeavour to utilize all differences existing in the positions of the various imperialist powers. We must utilize them skilfully in the interests of the defence of peace, not forgetting for a moment the necessity of direct-

¹ V. I. Lenin, "*Left-Wing*" Communism, an Infantile Disorder.

ing the blow at the enemy in our own countries, against our "own" imperialism. (*Applause.*)

IV. THE ATTACK OF FASCIST ITALY ON ABYSSINIA AND THE ACCENTUATION OF THE COLONIAL QUESTION

Permit me to dwell on the policy of fascist Italy and its colonial and military expansion in Eastern Africa, directed primarily against Abyssinia.

I shall confine myself here to four observations.

First observation. By the example of Italy we clearly see that the fascist regime, due to its policy and the contradictions inherent in this policy, is inevitably being drawn into war.

Italian fascism cannot boast of having been consistent in its foreign policy. In 1923, immediately after coming to power, Mussolini supported imperialist France in carrying out the military occupation of the Ruhr. In the following years—up to 1934—the basic line of his policy was, on the contrary, that of a struggle to undermine the hegemony of French imperialism in Europe by means of organizing a bloc of "revisionist" powers. Italian fascism during this period paraded its "traditional friendship" with England, but at the same time it carried on intrigues against England in Asia Minor and the Red Sea. On the shores of Arabia it fomented the war of the Arab kingdom of Yemen against the Arab kingdom of Hedjaz, the vassal of the British Empire.

Today it is fighting British imperialism over the Abyssinian question. The fascist newspapers threaten Britain with the destruction of its formidable naval base at Malta inside thirty minutes. There is a fundamental reason for this succession of somersaults in the foreign policy of Italian fascism, and that is the search for a solution by arms of the domestic and foreign problems and contradictions of the fascist regime. The hankering for war, for victories in the field, as one of the means of strengthening the basis of the dictatorship, haunts the leaders of the fascist regime. All the twists and turns of international policy serve them as a pretext. It is only the military weakness of Italy, in comparison with other big imperialist powers, plus the lack of chauvinism among the people, that has restrained Italian imperialism from war. The Italian people, who fought heroically on the barricades in the years of civil war during the struggle for national independence, when they knew that they were fighting for their liberty

and for their rights, do not intend to fight for the sake of the colonial adventures of their hated rulers. (*Applause.*)

Second observation. The conflict with Abyssinia is likewise the last lap in the evolution of the nationalist and chauvinist demagoguery of fascism, the sum and substance of the so-called people's campaigns with the aid of which fascism has endeavoured to deceive the masses. Fascism launched new demagogic campaigns every time it encountered difficulties, every time the situation of the country became tense. But a moment comes when all demagoguery ceases to avail and fascism, under the lash of its own unbridled chauvinism, hounded on by the bourgeois groups that are most interested in a military issue, precipitates itself into the war which it has preached as a healing recipe for the world and as an inevitable necessity for the solution of the problems facing it. War is the height of wisdom of the fascist regimes.

Third observation. The bellicose campaign of Italy in Eastern Africa has had as its consequence the aggravation of her relations with the big capitalist powers, not only in the area affected by the Italian attack, but in all other areas as well. In Europe, the repercussions of this campaign are already today extremely strong and will become still stronger if an armed conflict breaks out. In fact, there is not a single capitalist state which is not directly or indirectly affected by this conflict. Great Britain, who is opposing Italy's war policy for alleged pacifist reasons, is guided in fact by selfish imperialist interests, seeing in the occupation of Abyssinia by Italy the first concrete act modifying the map of colonial possessions in Africa, and thus raising in practice the question of a new repartition of the world. At a moment when the demand for colonies is the subject of a huge mass campaign in Germany and is being raised even—even by Poland, this is a very dangerous precedent.

France would prefer to let Italy have a free hand, for she does not want to lose the latter's support, which she will need at a decisive hour. On the other hand, however, she fears that if Italy has her hands full in Africa, the situation may at any moment become extremely strained in Europe, where German fascism is only waiting for an opportunity to set about realizing its designs in Austria, in the Danube Basin and on the Italian frontier.

Even Japan, which is 12,000 kms. away from East Africa, and is as yet hardly interested in Abyssinia to the extent it pretends, intervenes none the less lustily in the conflict, seeing in it an excellent pretext for hiding its own imperialist visage under the mask of protector of the coloured peoples.

The impossibility of erecting barriers to isolate the different zones of friction between the big imperialist powers, the impossibility of localizing any conflict breaking out between them is plainly shown by the example of Abyssinia. *Peace is indivisible.*

The last, but not the least important, observation. The attack of fascist Italy on Abyssinia will inevitably result in a new intensification of antagonisms and in an open struggle between the imperialist world and the colonial peoples. The struggle of the Negro peoples of central and Eastern Africa, which has been going on for decades, has ceased for a time. For decades the natives in Africa have been subjected to a regime not only of exploitation and enslavement but of veritable physical extermination. The crisis years increased the horrors of the colonial regime enforced by the Europeans on the immense black continent. On the other hand the Italian fascists, in the war which they waged in Lybia in 1924-29, gave a proof of how fascism conducts its colonizing activity. In this sphere also fascism has proved to be the most barbarous form of bourgeois rule.

The war of Italy in Lybia was conducted from start to finish as a war of extermination of the native population. It ended in the massacre of 20,000 natives—men, women and children—who had been driven by armed force into the most arid part of the country, where they died from hunger and thirst and were mowed down by machine-gun fire from aeroplanes.

The war of fascism against the last free native state in Africa will evoke a reaction and indignation throughout black Africa, in all the Arab countries and in Mohammedan India. The first symptoms of this indignation are already visible.

We must bear in mind these observations of the bourgeois colonizers when we outline the perspective for the formation of a revolutionary situation in connection with the prospect of war.

Abyssinia is an economically and politically backward country. No trace of a national-revolutionary movement or even of a democratic movement has yet been in evidence there. It is a country, moreover, in which the transition from a feudal regime, the substructure of which is semi-independent tribes, to a centralized monarchy is taking place rather slowly. But this is not the decisive factor in determining our attitude towards the war engineered by Italy.

Our Italian Communist Party was perfectly right in adopting a defeatist position towards the imperialist war of Italian fascism and in launching the slogan "Hands off Abyssinia." And I can assure you

that if the Negus of Abyssinia, by shattering the aggressive plans of fascism, helps the Italian proletariat to strike a death blow at the regime of the blackshirts, no one will reproach him with being "backward." The Abyssinian people is the ally of the Italian proletariat against fascism, and from this platform we assure the people of Abyssinia of our sympathy. The revolutionary traditions of the Italian people, the traditions of Garibaldi's Volunteers—traditions which were carried on by the first Italian internationalists who threw themselves heart and soul into the fight in Poland and Hungary, in Greece and South America, wherever the banner of struggle for national liberty was raised—these traditions impel the Italian working people to side with the Abyssinian people against the fascist bourgeoisie.

Our Second World Congress in 1920 greeted the struggle of the oppressed peoples of Asia against imperialism as an integral part of the world revolution. It pledged all revolutionaries to support this struggle with all their energy and all their resources. Today, when, as a result of the fascist aggression, we have the prospect of new reserves of the anti-imperialist revolution on the vast African continent being drawn into the struggle, the Seventh Congress of the Communist International once again proclaims that the Communists are the *vanguard of every struggle against imperialism*.

V. OUR CENTRAL SLOGAN—THE STRUGGLE FOR PEACE AND DEFENCE OF THE SOVIET UNION

In face of the abominable reality of the capitalist world, which is rushing headlong into war, millions and millions of men and women, young people and soldiers ask themselves in dismay: "Is our fate irrevocably ordained? Is it not possible to ward off this terrible scourge which threatens us?"

We Communists, the vanguard of the working class, can reply to this question. We know that war is an inevitable accompaniment of the capitalist regime. Capitalist society, which is based on the exploitation of man by man and the quest for profit, can engender only war. But we know equally well that all problems relating to the development of human society are in the final analysis decided by struggle—by the struggle of the masses. We launch our appeal to the masses at large who do not want war: "*Let us unite our forces! Let us fight together for peace! Let us organize the united front of all who want to defend and preserve peace!*"

Even at the gravest moments, the struggle for peace is not a hopeless one. It is not hopeless because, in struggling for peace, we now rely on the strength of the working class which, in the U.S.S.R., has the power in its hands. Just see what the Soviet Union has achieved. War has menaced its frontiers for many years. But by fighting stubbornly for peace, by sacrificing for the cause of peace all that it was possible to sacrifice, by relying on its power and strength, it has been able to avoid war up to the present. If the Soviet Union had not existed, the breathing space between the two cycles of wars would not have been so long. The peoples would long ago have been precipitated into a new bloody warfare. Our struggle for peace, in which we rely on the strength of the Soviet Union, has, therefore, every chance of being successful. Every month, every week which we gain is of enormous value for humanity. *Conscious of the deepest aspirations of the masses and the vital interests of all humanity, the Communist International puts itself at the head of the campaign for the defence of peace and the Soviet Union. The slogan of peace becomes our central slogan in the fight against war.*

The polemic over the slogan of peace conducted by Lenin against the Trotskyites during the World War was a polemic against the Menshevik tendency to counterpose the slogan of peace to the slogan of defeatism and of the transformation of the imperialist war into a civil war against the bourgeoisie. And indeed, during the imperialist war the problem could no longer be that of fighting to maintain peace, but that of utilizing the profound crisis and the wave of hatred against the capitalist world engendered by the war in order to unleash the proletarian revolution and overthrow the class rule of the bourgeoisie. It was the imperialist governments which prated to the people about a "just" and "democratic" peace in order to cover up the imperialist aims of their war and to rally the masses to the chauvinist policy of defence of the fatherland.

Comrades, we do not hide the slogan of transforming imperialist war into civil war. In case of war this slogan remains the basic, central slogan of the Bolsheviks. But in fighting stubbornly for peace we, as a result of this struggle, want to unite around the revolutionary vanguard the masses of the workers, toiling peasants and also the petty bourgeoisie, whom the proletariat must lead onward to transform imperialist war into a civil war against the bourgeoisie.

However, "the transformation of imperialist war into civil war signifies above all *revolutionary mass actions*." (Thesis of the Sixth World Congress.) These actions will be all the more possible and all

the more threatening for the bourgeoisie, the deeper we succeed in penetrating among the masses and the closer we link ourselves with them, conducting a struggle for the defence of peace prior to the outbreak of war, for the defence of peace which is the most profound desire of the working people.

If in the period immediately following the war we did not make the slogan of peace the centre of our agitation, it was because to everyone "peace" then implied the peace of Versailles, which we condemned and against which we were fighting. Even indirectly we wanted to avoid seeming to give our support to the Versailles system. Today, when the Versailles system has collapsed and German National-Socialism is striving to provoke a new war with the aim of forcing on the peoples of Europe a system of oppression even more monstrous than that of Versailles, the defence of peace acquires an entirely different content.

We defend peace, not because we are flabby Tolstoyans, but because we are striving to ensure the conditions for the victory of the revolution. If war breaks out tomorrow we shall enter the struggle with the greatest determination and fight with all the forces at our disposal, knowing full well that this struggle will be a life and death struggle between us and the bourgeoisie. We know that our forces are not negligible. But are they equal to the tremendous tasks confronting us today? The united front of the working class has up to now achieved notable successes only in one big capitalist country. The concrete task of re-establishing the political unity of the working class in a single revolutionary party is only now being set. We are, however, still far from its solution:

"It is in the interest of capital," wrote Lenin, "to defeat its enemy (the revolutionary proletariat) piecemeal, before the workers in all countries have united (actually united, *i.e.*, by beginning the revolution). It is in our interest to do all that is possible to take advantage of the slightest opportunity to postpone the decisive battle until the moment (or '*till after*') the revolutionary detachments of the single, great, international army have been united."¹

By making the fight for peace the centre of our activity, we give the lie in the most striking manner to all the various slanders, from the bourgeoisie to the counter-revolutionary Trotskyites,

¹ V. I. Lenin, "Left-Wing' Childishness and Petty-Bourgeois Mentality," *Selected Works*, Vol. VII.

who have the effrontery to claim that Communists are in favour of war, that they base their hopes on war, that only war will create a situation in which it will be possible to fight for the revolution, for the conquest of power.

We know quite well that in many countries, particularly in those which have a fascist dictatorship, there are working people who are inclined to think that only war can give their class the possibility of renewing the revolutionary struggle. We noted such tendencies in Italy, we note them now in Germany. We know that such tendencies manifest themselves above all among the elements which have become demoralized by the defeats suffered by the working class. They can be noted in our ranks among the opportunist elements who deny the possibility of carrying on mass work and the struggle under all conditions, utilizing even the slightest legal opportunities. Any concession to these tendencies or to those elements who desire the outbreak of war, even though they mask their opportunism by revolutionary phrases, can only isolate us from the masses. Moreover, we already know by experience that all those who, within the ranks of the working-class movement, exalted imperialist war as a means of paving the way to revolution have in the long run inevitably severed their connections with the working class and are today in the camp of fascism.

Our struggle for peace is at the same time the best defence of the Soviet Union. No one can doubt that the coming war, even if it begins as a war between two big imperialist powers or as a war of a big power against a small country, will inevitably tend to develop into and will inevitably become a war against the Soviet Union. Every year and every month of respite is a guarantee for us that the Soviet Union will be in a position to better repulse the attack of the imperialists. Our struggle for peace is thus directly linked up with the peace policy of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

The cause of peace and the cause of defending the Soviet Union become merged into one single cause, and no worker will refuse to fight for it.

VI. THE PEACE POLICY OF THE SOVIET UNION

I think that no working man, nor anyone, for that matter, has any doubts that the policy of the Soviet Union is a policy of peace. The fact that the Soviet Union pursues a policy of peace is not accidental, is not dependent upon any transient state of things. This

policy is part and parcel of the very nature of Soviet power, of the entire history of its development, of all that it is and does.

Was not the slogan of peace one of the main slogans with which the Bolsheviks fought for power in 1917? The Soviet government from the very first days of its existence manifested itself to the masses as the government that strove to end the imperialist war and establish peace. The decree on peace was the first decree which, after hearing a report by Lenin, was passed by the Congress of Soviets of Workers' and Peasants' Deputies on November 8, 1917, immediately after the formation of the Soviet government. This decree, which proposed the immediate conclusion of a genuine democratic peace and annulled all the treaties of the war period, did not result in the conclusion of peace since it was rejected by all the imperialist powers. But this decree secured for the Soviet government the staunch support of the wide masses of the working people and helped the Soviet government to win that mass basis which it has since then extended and consolidated more and more.

This bond between the masses of workers and peasants and their Soviet government which nothing can break, established on the basis of a policy of peace, was further strengthened by the conclusion of the Brest-Litovsk Peace, which offers us an example of the terms the German imperialists would have imposed on the whole world had they succeeded in completely realizing their plans.

In waging a resolute struggle against the petty-bourgeois adventurism of the so-called "Left" Communists, who in the days of Brest-Litovsk cherished the idea of a "revolutionary" war, Lenin and the Bolshevik Party declared to the masses that the Soviet government was not pursuing a policy of "prestige" but was being guided in its foreign policy exclusively by the interests of preserving and strengthening the positions held by the revolution.

"Our entire policy and propaganda," wrote Lenin in this connection, "is by no means directed towards embroiling the peoples in war, but to putting an end to war. Experience also has sufficiently demonstrated that the only way out of perpetual wars is the socialist revolution. . . . But if in doing everything in our power to accelerate this revolution we find ourselves in the position of a weak socialist republic which is being attacked by the imperialist robbers, are we correct in our policy of taking advantage of the dissensions among them so as to make their alliance against us more difficult? Of course, such a policy is correct. We have pur-

sued it for four years. And the most important manifestation of this policy was the Brest Treaty. While German imperialism was showing resistance, we, by taking advantage of the contradictions among the imperialists themselves, succeeded in holding out even when the Red Army had not yet been created.”¹

Thanks to this policy of peace the Soviet Union has been successful up to now in smashing all the plans of isolation and encirclement hatched against it by the imperialists. All the imperialist states of any importance at all have been obliged to establish diplomatic relations with the Soviet Union. The U.S.S.R. has concluded non-aggression pacts with all countries with which it has common boundaries, the only exception being Japan, who has refused to conclude such a pact. Beginning with the Genoa Conference and right down to the Disarmament Conference, the Soviet Union has persistently raised the question of complete disarmament. When its proposals for complete disarmament were rejected it came forward with the proposal for partial disarmament, fighting tenaciously to diminish the war danger.

Since the war Social-Democracy has been in power in quite a number of countries. But has there been a single Social-Democratic government that has done even a hundredth part as much in the cause of peace as the Soviet Union has done? Has there been a single Social-Democratic government which would declare for the abrogation of all secret treaties concluded by the bourgeoisie for the preparation of war, which would solemnly renounce the so-called “historical” rights which clash with the interests of another country or with the cause of peace?

The Soviet government, by its presence of mind and firmness in face of the provocations of the Japanese generals, gives us an example of how the fight for peace must be conducted. Is there or has there ever been a government that was able to do in the defence of peace what the Soviets did when they agreed to sell the Chinese Eastern Railway? The U.S.S.R. has shown in this case how one must act if one really wants to avert war. Only the working class in power is able to pursue such a cool and, at the same time, bold policy of peace.

By its peace policy the Soviet Union has proved that only socialism means peace. It is for this reason that this policy has mobilized and is mobilizing the proletarians of all countries to fight for socialism, and rallies around the working class millions of working people, peasants and intellectuals who hate war and are striving to preserve peace.

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Russian edition, Vol. XXVI.

But, comrades, the peace policy of the Soviet Union is not a policy of capitulation to the enemy; it is not a policy which induces the U.S.S.R. to close its eyes to realities, to renounce the defence of the gains of the revolution.

"The development of capitalism," Lenin wrote in 1916, "proceeds very unevenly in the various countries. This cannot be otherwise under commodity production. It inevitably follows from this that socialism cannot be victorious simultaneously in *all* countries. It will be victorious first in one, or several countries, while the others will for some time remain bourgeois or pre-bourgeois. This must not only create friction, but a direct striving on the part of the bourgeoisie of other countries to crush the victorious proletariat of the socialist state. In these cases war on our part would be a legitimate and just war, it would be a war for socialism, for the liberation of other peoples from the bourgeoisie. Engels was quite right when in his letter to Kautsky of September 12, 1882, he openly admitted the possibility of 'wars of defence' on the part of *already victorious* socialism. What he had in mind was the defence of the victorious proletariat against the bourgeoisie of other countries."¹

From this historically determined inevitability of the attack of the imperialists against the socialist state, which Lenin pointed out as far back as 1916, arises the necessity for the U.S.S.R. to defend itself and to have for this purpose a powerful army. But we must emphasize the difference in character which exists between this army and the armies of all other countries. A war which this army will be compelled to wage will always be a just war of defence.

"The old army," we read in the preamble of the decree on the organization of the Red Army, "was an instrument for the class oppression of the working people by the bourgeoisie. When power passed to the working people and to the exploited classes, the necessity arose of creating a new army as the support of the Soviet government at the present time and as the basis for supplanting in the near future the regular army by a general arming of the people, and to serve as a support for the coming socialist revolution in Europe."

And indeed, with the existence of the Red Army we have for the first time in history a situation where a formidable armed force is

¹ V. I. Lenin, "The Military Program of the Proletarian Revolution," *Collected Works*. Russian edition, Vol. XIX.

put at the service of the cause of peace. Note the hypocrisy with which the representatives of the imperialists at Geneva discussed for years whether it is possible to put an armed force at the service of the so-called international organization of peace. They discussed it only in order to arrive at the conclusion that this was a dream that could never be achieved. The armies of the imperialists can indeed never become instruments of peace because of their very class character. It is precisely the class character of the Red Army that makes it a force which serves the cause of peace and inspires terror in the hearts of the fascists, the aggressors, the war incendiaries. The Red Army is an army of peace because it is the army of the working class.

On January 1, 1930, workers constituted 31.2 per cent of the Red Army. On January 1, 1934, the percentage of workers had risen to 45.8, while at the beginning of 1935 it was 49.3 per cent. But this percentage increases as we pass from the rank and file of the Red Army to its middle and higher commanding staffs. The contradiction which rends the bourgeois armies, where the mass of soldiers consists of workers and peasants while the commanding staffs consist of representatives of the most reactionary classes and cliques—this contradiction is unknown in the Red Army, in which workers constitute 72 per cent of the regimental commanders, 90 per cent of the divisional commanders, 100 per cent in the case of the commanders of army corps. (*Applause.*) Is more concrete proof necessary to show that the Red Army is an instrument of peace held in the firm hands of the working class?

The workers and collective farmers who form the overwhelming majority in the Red Army are no longer "soldiers." They are a part of that splendid Soviet youth whose representatives we greeted at the opening session of our Congress and who constitute the sole example in the world of a new generation, free, strong, joyful and confident in the future.

They are the sons of the heroes of the Civil War. They are a youth which has learned the conscious, voluntary discipline of socialist labour in the factory and the collective farm. They are a youth which knows that it owes to the revolution and the Soviet power the fact that it has been spared the horror of capitalist factories, of unemployment, of material and spiritual misery. This youth is imbued with the psychology of creation, because the land in which it was born is the only country where factories, cities, socialist industry, collective farms, a new life, are being built on a grand scale. The So-

viet Union is the land of pioneers of a new civilization, the land of peace. Dreams of conquest, decadent raptures over bloodshed and predatory wars as the sole "sanitary measures" for humanity, can be engendered only in countries of decaying capitalism.

The proletarians in the capitalist countries know that the Red Army is headed by the most devoted fighters for the revolution. They know that at the head of the Red Army stands our Comrade Voroshilov, a stalwart fighter of the proletarian revolution, the son of a railroad worker and a charwoman, who already at the age of seven worked in a coal mine at a wage of ten kopeks per day, a smith by profession, a member of the Bolshevik Party even before the Revolution of 1905, whose entire life is linked up with the struggles of the vanguard of the Russian workers under the leadership of Lenin and Stalin, a truly disciplined Bolshevik and one of the best pupils of Lenin and Stalin. (*All rise. Hearty cheers in honour of Comrade Voroshilov.*)

Will not the miners from the Ruhr and the North of France, will not the downtrodden workers in the textile factories of Japan recognize in Comrade Voroshilov and in the other leaders of the Red Army their class brothers and comrades-in-arms?

The revolutionary workers of the whole world know that the percentage of Bolshevik Party members and Young Communist League members in the ranks of the Red Army is steadily increasing. They know that the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army created by Lenin, which was forged during the Civil War under the direct leadership of Lenin and was led to victory by the great Stalin, is guided by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks), the sole Party so far which has given an example of persistent and victorious struggle against imperialist war.

Every step forward, therefore, in strengthening the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army is met with the greatest joy by all the exploited and by all friends of peace in every capitalist country.

The international proletariat knows and realizes that humanity would long ago have been dragged into the abyss of war if it had not been for the Red Army; it realizes that the existence of this powerful force is the guarantee of peace and of the victory of the working class.

I am convinced that I express the will of all those present at this Congress, the will of the working people of the whole world, in expressing our most ardent greetings to the Red Army.

Long live the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army, the bulwark of peace, the army of socialism and revolution, the hope of the working people of the whole world! (*Prolonged, stormy applause.*)

VII. MUTUAL AID PACTS AND THE INTERNATIONAL PROLETARIAT

Comrades, since the peace policy of the Soviet Union presupposes that the proletarian state takes into consideration the contradictions between the capitalist countries, its bounds are to a certain degree determined by the magnitude, intensity and nature of these contradictions, while its concrete forms cannot but change when the international situation changes as a whole.

It is precisely this that has not been understood by those who have expressed astonishment at the change in the Soviet Union's attitude toward the League of Nations. The League of Nations was set up as an international organization under the auspices of the Entente powers for the purpose of maintaining the "order" established by the post-war treaties. From the day of its foundation it has been undermined by the antagonisms and conflicts inherent in it. But when the question of a new repartition of the world became extraordinarily tense, when some of the big imperialist powers, presuming that the hour had struck when this problem could be solved by force of arms, developed their war drive, the League of Nations began to disintegrate.

The masses have seen that the League proved to be impotent in face of the seizure of Manchuria by Japan, in face of the wars waged by the vassals of the United States and Great Britain in South America, and in face of the aggression of fascist Italy against Abyssinia. But this impotence is accompanied by hesitations and resistance on the part of the powers which at the moment are not directly interested in war. The most aggressive countries have left the League of Nations: Japan in 1932, Germany in 1934; and the League of Nations, without formally amending its organization and statutes, nevertheless offers a certain obstacle to the realization of the plans of these powers and can be utilized to postpone the outbreak of war. In view of the new situation that had arisen the Soviet Union changed its attitude toward the League of Nations. The entry of the Soviet Union into the League of Nations showed the masses that the leaders of the Soviet Union are not doctrinaires, but Marxists, who correctly appraise the relation of forces existing in the capitalist world and who know how to make use of even the slightest pos-

sibility to extend their efforts in defence of peace and in the interests of the revolution.

The entry into the League of Nations was followed by further steps in developing the peace policy of the Soviet Union, which became more resolute as the threat of war increased and the contradictions between the countries that are instigators of war and the countries that at the moment are interested in the preservation of peace became more acute. This contradiction could be made use of to a much greater extent than all previous ones because it revealed as a result the temporary coincidence of the permanent aims of the peace policy of the Soviet Union and the temporary aims of the policy of certain capitalist countries.

The U.S.S.R. took a big step forward towards a rapprochement with a number of small, weak states whose independence, as we have already pointed out, is threatened by the militant designs of German fascism. The rapprochement with these states, to whom the Nazi aggression represents an extremely concrete and serious danger, led, as you know, to the formulation of a definition of the aggressor. This definition is of interest to us here not from a diplomatic standpoint but because it is a clear expression of the real contact which is being established between the working people of the Soviet Union, who are defending the achievements of the proletarian revolution, and the small peoples and nations that are defending their liberty and national integrity, and all the friends of peace.

Knowing the role which the national question plays in the life of the peoples, we can consider quite probable that in case of a war provoked by German fascism certain of the European peoples who have secured their independence at the price of so much suffering will, in order to preserve it, prefer to fight on the side of the Soviet Union—the only country in the world where the national question has been solved in accordance with the aspirations of the peoples, by every nationality being granted the right of self-determination. At all events, we know that this coincides with the interests of the peoples of Czechoslovakia, Lithuania and a number of other small states; it is the bounden duty of the revolutionary vanguard of the working class to prevent the bourgeoisie of these countries from pursuing a policy which runs counter to the interests of these peoples.

The proposal for the conclusion of an Eastern Pact was made after the definition of the aggressor had been established. Based on the recognition of the indivisibility of peace and the impossibility of separating the danger of war menacing the East of Europe from the

threat of war in the West, this proposal aimed at driving the instigators of war into a corner and rallying all friends of peace, no matter who they might be.

As is well known, the proposal for the conclusion of an Eastern Pact was rejected by the warmongers, and this was bound to be followed by the establishment of especially close connections between the Soviet Union and the states interested in active resistance to the present aggressors—which has led to the conclusion of pacts of mutual aid between the Soviet Union and France, and with Czechoslovakia.

The question of these mutual aid pacts is one in which international working-class public opinion shows the utmost interest at present. It is necessary that we should dwell on it in more detail. The mutual aid pacts concluded by the Soviet Union are in accordance with the line of development of the peace policy of the Soviet Union, the foundations of which were laid down by Lenin. They are peace pacts, concluded publicly, open to all, and have nothing in common with the secret war agreements of tsarist diplomacy or the pact that has been concluded between fascist Germany and fascist Poland. At the same time, they differ radically from all those platonic acts and declarations, entirely void of any real political content and hypocritical throughout, with which post-war diplomacy has made us familiar—from the Kellogg Pact to the final declaration of the Disarmament Conference.

The mutual aid pacts concluded by the Soviet Union are serious acts of positive policy which aim at uniting all possible forces for an active defence of peace. On this account we are surprised that anyone could find it strange that the conclusion of the mutual aid pact with France was accompanied by a declaration of Comrade Stalin, in which he expressed "complete understanding and approval of the policy of national defence pursued by France for maintaining her armed forces at the level corresponding to the needs of her security." Rather, I am of the opinion that it would have been strange if a declaration of this kind had not followed, for the absence of such a precise definition of the position would have deprived the mutual aid pact of all its efficacy as an instrument of positive peace policy.

From the point of view of theory, the possibility under certain conditions of concluding an agreement envisaging even military collaboration between the proletarian state and a capitalist state is not open to doubt. Lenin wrote about this more than once.

In May 1918, when a proposal for a military agreement was

made to the Soviet Republic by the Anglo-French coalition, the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party rejected the proposal on grounds *not of principle but of simple political expediency*, not considering such an agreement useful in the existing circumstances. Lenin wrote at the time:

“Without renouncing in general military agreements with one of the imperialist coalitions against the other in cases where such an agreement, without violating the principles of Soviet power, could reinforce the position of the latter and paralyze the attack of any imperialist power against it, we at the present moment cannot accept a military agreement with the Anglo-French coalition.”¹

Thus, comrades, the position of the Bolsheviks in regard to this question is absolutely clear. Without violating the principles of Soviet power, but, on the contrary, reinforcing them, they do everything necessary so as not to have against them a consolidated bloc of capitalist countries. They consider, and, of course, quite rightly, that the infantry, cavalry, guns, tanks and bombing planes of fascist Germany are something very concrete, and they strive to oppose them by something equally concrete. The proletariat of the Soviet Union and the Bolshevik Party in power in the Soviet Union could not and should not adopt any other attitude.

And what of our Parties in the capitalist countries? It was precisely against our Parties that our enemies of all shades and varieties attempted to concentrate their attacks; they looked for some contradiction alleged to exist between Comrade Stalin's declaration and the policy of the Communist Parties, particularly in France and Czechoslovakia, which are carrying on a struggle against their own bourgeoisie, voting against military budgets, and in France voted against the two-year military service law, etc. This line of attack begun by the bourgeoisie was taken up by the Socialists, and very soon the counter-revolutionary Trotskyites and renegades of all shades were outdoing the rest in their lying slanders.

On the whole, our Parties succeeded in sizing up the situation correctly. There have been some waverings, individual comrades even getting the idea that the conclusion of mutual aid pacts meant losing sight of the prospect of revolution in Europe. Practical experience has rapidly convinced these comrades that they were grossly mistaken,

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Russian edition, Vol. XXX.

and that, on the contrary, the new pact by which the Soviet Union confirmed its peace policy could only enhance the prestige of the proletarian state in the eyes of the working people of all countries, in the eyes of the whole world, and consequently also the prestige of socialism and the proletarian revolution. The bourgeois who imagined that they could throw the Communist movement into confusion by declaring that it was they who were now in agreement with the Communists, with the Bolsheviks, with the Soviet Union, grossly miscalculated. The masses in France and in Czechoslovakia replied: If it is true that the Soviets acted rightly, then we shall vote for the Communists—but, of course, for the real ones.

Certain comrades even compared the conclusion of the mutual aid pacts to a compulsory retreat under the pressure of the enemy. But these few comrades have only demonstrated that they are unable to distinguish between a retreat and an advance. Could one conceive a more remarkable success than the fact that a big capitalist country is compelled to sign an agreement of mutual aid with the Soviet Union, an agreement which stipulates defence against an aggressor, defence of peace and of the frontiers of the country of proletarian dictatorship?

In spite of the instances of wavering mentioned, all our Sections, and in particular the Communist Parties in the countries directly concerned, have shown a high degree of political maturity. They realized that it was important for them not only to properly appraise and approve an act emphasizing the peace policy of the Soviet Union, but that it was essential to determine their own political line, to take into account the situation in which they are placed, a situation radically different from that of the Bolshevik Party and the working class in the U.S.S.R.

For us it is absolutely indisputable that there is a complete identity of aim between the peace policy of the Soviet Union and the policy of the working class and the Communist Parties of the capitalist countries. There is not, and cannot be, any doubt in our ranks on this score. We not only defend the Soviet Union in general. We defend concretely its whole policy and each of its acts. But this identity of aim by no means signifies that at every given moment there must be complete coincidence in all acts and on all questions between the tactics of the proletariat and Communist Parties that are still struggling for power and the concrete tactical measures of the Soviet proletariat and the C.P.S.U.(B.), which already have the power in their hands in the Soviet Union.

Numerous examples could be cited of the lack of coincidence in the positions of the proletarian parties in various countries in regard to some concrete question.

Let us take, for example, the policy of the Bolshevik Party in 1917 after the February Revolution. During this period, the task of the working class and of its revolutionary vanguard throughout the capitalist world was to fight for the transformation of the imperialist war into a civil war against the bourgeoisie, that is to say, for the revolutionary overthrow of the capitalist order. But after the February Revolution the position of the working class in Russia was different from that in other countries, for in Russia the first step towards transforming the imperialist war into a civil war had already been accomplished. In all other countries, the working class could strive to transform the imperialist war into civil war only by struggling to overthrow the national coalition governments then in power. In Russia, on the contrary, the aim which Lenin put before the vanguard of the working class during the first period after February was not that of the immediate overthrow of the Provisional Government.

“Now it was no longer possible to proceed directly to overthrow the government, because it was connected with the Soviets, which were under the influence of the defencists, and the Party would have had to wage war both against the government and against the Soviets, which was beyond its strength.”¹

It was necessary first of all to win over the masses to Bolshevism and to strive for the formation of a government based on the Soviets, where the Mensheviks and Socialist-Revolutionaries still had a majority; this would make it possible to expose the counter-revolutionary policy of these petty-bourgeois parties and to isolate them from the masses. It was necessary, therefore, to overthrow the Provisional Government, but “not immediately and not along the usual lines.”

Was the aim for which the Bolsheviks in Russia and the revolutionary Social-Democrats in the other countries were struggling the same? Yes, it was the same. But was there at that particular period a complete coincidence in the position of the Bolsheviks in Russia and that of the revolutionary Social-Democrats in the other countries on this fundamental question of attitude towards the government? No, no such coincidence existed, and the fact that it was lacking was due to the different degree of development of the revolutionary struggle

¹ J. Stalin, *The October Revolution*.

and the difference in the relation of the class forces in the different countries.

It was for this very same reason that Lenin wrote that at the time of the Tsereteli and Kerensky government the Bolsheviks were no longer defeatists, although the chief purpose of their policy remained the same as before—the transformation of the imperialist war into a civil war. In this sphere too the identical revolutionary policy of the working class in all countries required after the February Revolution, under the Kerensky-Tsereteli government, tactics differing from those of the working class in those capitalist countries where the revolution was not yet so far advanced.

A classic example of incomprehension of the fact that the tactical positions of the proletarian parties in regard to one and the same concrete question need not necessarily be identical is elicited by Lenin in the discussion with Kievsky in 1916 on the right of nations to self-determination. Kievsky at the time accused Lenin of a “dualistic interpretation of the demand” for self-determination of nations.

“He,” wrote Lenin, “thinks we are ‘dualists,’ first, because we call upon the workers in the oppressing nations to do *something different*—in relation only to the national problem—from that which we call upon the workers in the oppressed nations to do.

“In order to verify whether or not P. Kievsky’s ‘monism’ is the same as Dühring’s ‘monism,’ we must see what the *objective* situation is.

“Is the *actual* condition of the workers in the oppressing nations the same as that of the workers in the oppressed nations from the standpoint of the national problem?

“No, they are not the same.”¹

Pointing out further that Kievsky’s words about the “monistic action of the International” are an “empty sonorous phrase,” Lenin continues:

“In order that the action of the International, which in *real life* consists of workers who are *divided* into those belonging to oppressing nations and those belonging to oppressed nations, may be *monistic* action, propaganda must be carried on *differently* in each case. This is how we must argue from the point of view of real (not Dühring) ‘monism,’ from the point of view of Marxian materialism!

¹ V. I. Lenin, “A Caricature of Marxism and ‘Imperialist Economism,’” *Selected Works*, Vol. V.

"An example? We have already cited one—that of Norway, and nobody has attempted to refute us. In this concrete case taken from life, the *action* of the Norwegian and Swedish workers was 'monistic,' unified, internationalist, *only* because and in so far as the Swedish workers *unconditionally* championed the right of Norway to secede, while the Norwegian workers raised the question of secession *only conditionally*. If the Swedish workers had not been *unconditionally* in favour of the right of the Norwegians to secede they would have been *chauvinists*, brothers-in-arms of the chauvinist Swedish landlords, who wished to 'retain' Norway by force, by war. If the Norwegian workers had *not* raised the question of secession *conditionally*, *i.e.*, so that even members of the Social-Democratic Party could conduct propaganda and vote against secession, the Norwegian workers would have failed in their duty as internationalists and would have sunk to narrow, *bourgeois*, Norwegian nationalism. Why? Because the separation was effected by the *bourgeoisie*, and not by the proletariat! Because the Norwegian bourgeoisie, like any other bourgeoisie, *always* strives to drive a wedge between the workers of its own country and the workers of 'foreign' countries! Because every democratic demand (including self-determination) is, for the class conscious workers, *subordinated* to the higher interests of socialism.... To fail to understand this difference, which is a prerequisite for the 'monistic action' of the International, is on a par with failing to understand why 'monistic action' against the tsarist army, say near Moscow, demands that the revolutionary forces marching from Nizhni should proceed westward, while those from Smolensk should proceed eastward."¹

Our comrades of the French Communist Party and of the Czechoslovakian Communist Party have understood that their policy must be determined by the same Marxist-Leninist method, which demands that the concrete circumstances be taken into account. For this reason, in addressing themselves to the bourgeoisie of their countries, they could and had to say to them:

"Gentlemen, you have signed a pact, a limited pact, with the working class of the Soviet Union that has the power in its hands, but you have not signed any pact with the working class of our country, with us. We have no guarantee that you will not utilize your army, which continues to be a class army, against the working class of our country and against the colonial peoples, our allies in the struggle

¹ *Ib'id.*

against imperialism. We have no guarantee at all that you will not continue to make the poor, and not the rich, pay all the necessary expenses for the organization of this army. We cannot control the manner in which your class government and your reactionary and fascist General Staff will spend the money that you take away from the poor in order to pay for the organization of the army. We have not even any guarantee that, when the decisive moment arrives, you will remain loyal to the pact that you are signing today.

"For all these reasons, gentlemen, we can neither vote for your military budgets nor give up the struggle against your government. But please note that this does not mean that we have no interest in the pact that you have concluded with the Soviet Union or that we are indifferent to the manner in which you put it into effect. We know that in your ranks there are people who are opposed to this pact, that there exists a section of the bourgeoisie who would like to tear it up. We will staunchly defend the pact, because it is an instrument in the struggle for peace and for the defence of the Soviet Union. We shall vote for the pact in Parliament and shall expose any attempt to pursue a policy different from or in contradiction to the obligations ensuing from the pact."

Those who do not understand the profound inner consistency of this position adopted by our comrades in France and Czechoslovakia will never understand anything of the real dialectics of events and of revolutionary dialectics, even though they fancy themselves to be highly intelligent and logical persons, as Leon Blum, for instance, fancies himself. But, judging from what our comrades of the Communist parties of France and Czechoslovakia said in their speeches, our revolutionary dialectics has been understood by the masses, and that is quite good enough for us. (*Applause.*)

VIII. THE UNITED FRONT IN THE FIGHT FOR PEACE AND IN DEFENCE OF THE SOVIET UNION

Comrades, in the fight for peace, against imperialist war and in defence of the Soviet Union, our immediate fundamental political task consists in creating the widest united front of the worker and peasant masses, the petty bourgeoisie and the intellectuals. It is in this very sphere, comrades, in the struggle for peace, that our united front policy can score the greatest successes.

It is no chance matter that the first important step in recent years in overcoming the resistance of the Social-Democratic parties

to the united front was made by the anti-war movement, whose slogan was first proclaimed from the platform of the Amsterdam Anti-War Congress by Romain Rolland and Henri Barbusse, those inspired champions of the struggle against imperialist war. The Communists have stalwartly assisted the development of this movement, and will continue to do so. But we cannot consider as sufficient either the progress which has been made in this field or the achievements of the united front in the anti-war struggle in general. The scope of the united front movement against war does not as yet correspond to the intense war preparations being made by the capitalists, does not as yet correspond to the acuteness and gravity of the danger of war. All our Sections are faced with the task of doing everything in their power to bring into the fight for peace all those who do not want war, all those who abhor war, all those who are ready to fight for peace: Social-Democratic workers, the mass of people with pacifist inclinations, women, children and the national minorities who are under the threat of war.

The Position of Social-Democracy

At the last plenary session of the Executive Committee of the Second International, a resolution was adopted on the struggle against war. In it we find a statement concerning the necessity of concentrating its fire against German National-Socialism and of defending the Soviet Union. Speaking of the attitude which the working class should adopt in case of war, this resolution of the Second International refers to the decision of the Stuttgart Congress.

We have the right to ask the Social-Democratic leaders: What value has the reference to the Stuttgart resolution, which speaks of utilizing the crisis resulting from war in order to hasten the downfall of the rule of the capitalist class, if nothing is done to carry out this directive? In order to carry out the directive of the Stuttgart resolution, it is essential already today to bring about the unity of action of the working class in the struggle for peace.

If you continue to come out, as heretofore, against the united front, if you hinder its realization, then the reference to the Stuttgart decisions cannot have any value and is not a guarantee of your position in the future, just as the resolution adopted in 1907 at the Stuttgart congress could not guarantee the Second International from the collapse of August 4, 1914.

The Pacifist Movement

In the pacifist movement we also note an extremely curious differentiation. Abhorrence for the war which the capitalists and fascists are preparing evokes opposition to war from a pacifist standpoint among more and more considerable sections. The peace ballot organized in Great Britain by the Friends of the League of Nations, in which eleven million people, representing more than half the adult population of the country, participated, is a vivid example of the enormous extent of pacifist sentiments among the masses. The vast majority of those who took part in this ballot expressed not only their abhorrence for war but their wish that the instigators of war and the aggressors be effectively resisted. We revolutionary workers understand and correctly appreciate the aspirations of these masses with pacifist sentiments, even if they are still sometimes expressed in a naive and politically incorrect form.

Our place is amongst these masses, explaining to them what they do not yet understand, and at the same time assisting them in fighting to achieve all that is fundamentally just and humane in their strivings for peace. This is all the more necessary because we are not at all sure as to what path these masses with pacifist sentiments will choose in the future. If they establish contacts with the working class and its vanguard, they may form a formidable barrier against war and the instigators of war. If the opposite is the case, the pacifist illusions which still dominate these masses may impel them to a position which instead of hindering war will be used by the instigators of a new imperialist war for their own ends. Do not the German National-Socialist leaders in their furious campaign for war have recourse to mendacious "peace" demagoguery? Is there not in the pacifist camp a trend nourished partly by people under the spell of pacifist illusions and partly by counter-revolutionary elements and renegades from communism, who, under the pretext of desiring "justice" for Germany too, are in reality helping the war propaganda of German fascism?

We must, therefore, go amongst the pacifist masses, work actively among them, enlighten them, using forms of organization and activities adapted to the level of consciousness of these masses and which will help them take the first step towards conducting an effective struggle against war and capitalism. However, we must always take two things into account. First, that the organization of the pacifist masses cannot and must not be a Communist organization, and second, that, in working in this organization, Communists must never

shirk explaining with the greatest patience and insistence their own views on all the problems of the struggle against war.

In this way we can succeed in emancipating the sincere pacifists from the influence of illusions and mistaken views, and in exposing those hypocritical pacifists who by their policy screen the preparations for war. It must be admitted that in many cases our comrades, unfortunately, follow a line contrary to this. On the one hand they strive to give to the organizations of the pacifist masses the character of a Communist organization and introduce into them inappropriate methods of Party leadership. On the other hand they neglect their duty of conducting propaganda of our correct Leninist views on the question of struggle against war. Both these mistakes must be rectified.

The Struggle for the Immediate Demands of the Masses

The struggle for the immediate economic and political demands of the working class, the toiling peasantry and all sections of the working people must play a primary role in the organization of the united front for the fight for peace. The very preparation for war carried on by the bourgeoisie at the expense of the working people impels the masses to take up this struggle for their immediate demands.

Just look at the record figures the war budgets have reached during recent years. This implies that the burden of taxation levied on the workers, peasants, craftsmen, and small shopkeepers is continually increasing. The profits of the war industry are also reaching record figures, while wages are falling more and more, particularly in the countries which are most strenuously preparing for war.

The preparation for war, especially in the fascist countries, is accompanied by measures for the organization of the whole of the war industry and for adapting the entire economic life of the country to the needs of war. This has an immediate effect on the position of the workers, both from the economic and the political point of view. In Germany, a plan for the reorganization of the whole of industry for war purposes is already being put into operation. The same thing is taking place in Japan. In Italy, the introduction of corporations is simply one of the forms of centralization of industry in the eventuality of war.

In the war industry the workers are already subjected to a war regime, and this emphasizes the necessity for developing particularly active work in this branch of industry.

Unfortunately, we have to place on record that in this respect a

most serious defect in the organization of our struggle for peace is to be observed.

The struggle for the immediate demands of the workers, peasants and the working people in general is our most effective means of exposing the chauvinist demagogy of fascism, of exposing the mendacious character of the slanders disseminated by it: the mendacity of the race theory, of "war in the interests of all," of the "state being above classes," of the "proletarian nation which is fighting the capitalist nations," of the "necessity of winning a place under the sun," etc.

In the struggle for the real interests of the proletariat and the masses of the working people against the exploiters and oppressors, the workers and the working people as a whole become schooled in the spirit of proletarian internationalism. Here is being forged the weapon which in the final analysis will enable us to paralyze chauvinist propaganda. But for this weapon to be really sharp we must take upon ourselves the defence not only of the immediate economic interests of the masses, but also of their political demands and aspirations. We must know how to interpret all their interests; we must show that it is precisely on the working class and its vanguard that the task devolves of solving all the problems affecting every section of the working people in the given country.

I shall not repeat in this connection what has already been said by Comrade Dimitrov concerning the necessity of considering and respecting the revolutionary traditions of the people, of understanding and supporting their national demands. In our fight against imperialist war, the directive given to all revolutionary workers by Comrade Dimitrov in his historic report acquires still greater significance at the present moment, when we speak of the tasks of the working class and of the Communists in the struggle for national liberation and for support of wars for national liberation, when we are confronted by the prospect of a new upsurge of the revolutionary movement of the colonial peoples against imperialism.

Women in the Fight for Peace

Another serious defect is the inadequate development of work among women. It must be frankly admitted that with the exception of the Communist Parties of a few countries, we are at the present time devoting less attention than before to work among women. As far as the fight against war is concerned, this is a most serious defect. National-Socialism has put women back where they were a century ago. In Germany, and in all other countries too, for that matter, they

are directly affected by the feverish preparations for war. The high cost of living, increased taxation, and militarization measures affect women in every aspect of their life—as working women, as mothers and as wives. In a number of countries women have already been directly drawn into war preparations, particularly in Germany and Japan, where these preparations are going on apace. The active participation of women in war, not only in the factories but also in the army service, is as a rule provided for in every country. In the war industry the factories are even now employing female labour on a large scale, because it is worse paid and more severely exploited. In Germany in 1933, for example, where 150,000 workers were discharged from factories and works, in accordance with instructions of the fascist government, not a single woman worker was discharged from the armament factories; on the contrary, thousands of new women workers were taken on in plants producing war supplies.

In noting these facts, we must not close our eyes to the tremendous attention which the bourgeoisie and, primarily, the most reactionary parties of the bourgeoisie, are devoting to the most varied ways and means of organizing the women. It would be absurd to think that this work does not yield the bourgeoisie any results. Of course, pacifist sentiments among the women are extremely strong. We know that in the demonstrations against war, in the protest actions against war which are frequently taking place in various countries, for example, against the manœuvres, women played a most prominent part. But that should not satisfy us. We are still not counterposing the forms and methods of organizing the women utilized by the bourgeoisie, and particularly by the fascists, by sufficiently effective work. We are marking time; our work in this field is not on a par with the tasks of our Parties, which alone strive for the complete emancipation of women and conduct a consistent struggle for peace.

In France, we have a most interesting example of the development of a mass movement of women against war and fascism. The large pacifist organizations affiliated to this movement number hundreds of thousands of women of different political trends as well as women not belonging to any party at all. The participation of the Communists in this movement has been very successful indeed, and we regret that the example of France has not been followed in other countries. Thanks to active participation in this movement, our comrades have found means of establishing contact with those masses of women who up to now have held aloof from all political activity. Even in France, however, not all our comrades understand correctly how Communists should

approach such a movement. Our comrades do not always understand that in order to reach the masses of women who are still not under our influence, just as to reach the pacifist masses in general, we must take into account the nature of the organization to which they belong.

We must by no means endeavour to break up such an organization; on the contrary, we must find the most varied forms of collaborating with it in order to penetrate into its ranks. In some cases our comrades, instead of understanding and pursuing this correct organizational and political line, substituted for broad mass work in the existing organizations a narrow and sectarian Communist women's organization. This makes it difficult for us to build up a real mass movement of women on behalf of peace and against war.

Youth and the Fight for Peace

The same tardiness is to be observed in the organization of a united front of the youth in the fight against war. Yet it is precisely the youth that is affected more than anybody else by the preparations for a new imperialist war; it is precisely among the youth that the bourgeoisie is propagating war preparations with particular vigour. It is above all the youth that fascism allures with its chauvinist and war propaganda. In practically every country, the youth have already been made a part of the monstrous war machine as a result of the militarization measures which are being introduced.

These measures are today common to all the fascist countries; but they also extend, in a more or less open form, to the democratic countries. In Germany, all forms of youth organization are connected in one way or another with military training. In Italy military training begins at the age of eight, and quite recently a new organization has been formed for children from six years of age which also sets itself the aim of conducting militarist and chauvinist propaganda.

These widespread activities of the bourgeoisie in regard to the militarization of the youth must be countered by us by equally widespread activity aimed at wresting the younger generation from the influence of the bourgeoisie and fascism. Although some progress has been made in this direction very recently, it must nevertheless be admitted, comrades, that in this respect we are showing almost no activity.

A fact we cannot deny is that while many bourgeois parties and trends—from the fascist to the Catholic—have succeeded in creating

a large, organized youth movement, we have not yet succeeded in achieving this to a sufficient degree. This is one of the basic weaknesses of our anti-war work. And, undoubtedly, not the least cause of this backwardness is the fact that we underestimated the influence of the bourgeoisie on the younger generation.

We have contented ourselves with saying, and it is absolutely correct in itself, that the class consciousness of the masses cannot be lulled and the class struggle cannot be suppressed for long. This, of course, is true. The experience that the younger generation is gaining in the factories and the experience it will gain during a war will inevitably undermine the influence of the bourgeoisie and of fascism among the youth. But we cannot and must not wait. We must save the youth enrolled in the mass fascist organizations from going through the tragic experience that our generation went through in the World War. We want the youth to fight shoulder to shoulder with us now for peace. We must therefore direct and accelerate the process of undermining the influence of the bourgeoisie among the youth. We must find a way of approaching the younger generation, we must understand their thoughts and their moods. And if, in order to find an approach to the new generation, it is necessary to speak to them in terms they understand, to cast aside empty formulas, to discard the old schemes, to change our methods of work and the forms of our organization—very well, we shall do so without any hesitation. To do this, we must first of all make a serious, close and thorough study of everything that is going on among the younger generation. I should like to say to our comrades who are directing the youth movement on a national and international scale that they should more often bear in mind the last words Lenin addressed to the Young Communist International, in his letter to the Third World Congress of that organization:

“I hope,” he writes in that letter, “that in spite of your *high calling* you will not forget the most important thing, the necessity of advancing in a practical manner the training of the youth and *study*.” (My italics.—E.)

Comrades, you must not remain content with your *high calling*. Only by studying and assimilating everything that is taking place in the younger generation will you be enabled to accomplish your task. (Applause.)

We must not be afraid; we must go wherever the younger generation is to be found. This means that the forms of organization of

the militant united front of the youth in the fight for peace and against war must be extremely flexible, differing in accordance with country and circumstance. In the bourgeois-democratic countries we must follow the example set by our French comrades, who have at last been able to find an approach to the youth. We can only welcome and give our wholehearted support to such steps as the convening of the Students' Congress and to the recent widespread activity of the World Youth Committee for Struggle Against War and Fascism. In participating in these movements we must play a leading part not by advertising that fact, but by winning the confidence of the youth, who will see in us the most ardent champions of their vital interests, the most convinced defenders of all their aspirations.

In the fascist countries, it is absolutely essential to bridge the abyss that already exists in some cases, or is in the process of being created, between the older generation of revolutionary workers and Communists and the younger generation of workers.

We must once and for all put a stop to having a situation such as we have in Italy, where for instance, in a large industrial city, among several hundred comrades, there is not a single young comrade under 20 years of age, while tens of thousands of young people are enrolled in the fascist organizations. This is all the more to be regretted since experience shows that the youth drawn into the fascist organizations, once contact with us is established rapidly acquire the ability to be fired with indignation, to protest, and to fight against the fascists. There is only one method of overcoming the estrangement between the older and younger generations, namely, to get into the fascist organizations, to work within these organizations, to establish a united front and to organize our units within the fascist organizations themselves in the forms demanded by the situation. We must seek to transform whole sections of fascist youth organizations into bulwarks of support for our anti-war work.

We shall not surrender the youth to fascism. We shall not allow the youth to be turned into the shock troops of the warmongers. We shall turn the youth into the shock troops for our fight for peace. *(Applause.)*

IX. THE ARMY AND OUR TASKS

Comrades, a major factor determining our work in the army at the present moment is that the capitalist armies are more and more assuming a mass character. In the early post-war years the armament

race proceeded mainly along the line of improving the quality, and not of increasing the size, of the army. It was during this period that certain bourgeois military theorists developed the theory that war will no longer be conducted by mass armies but will be carried on by small professional armies, strongly armed and mechanized. The very development of imperialist rivalry, however, put an end to these attempts of the bourgeoisie to forego mass armies.

Even before 1935, the secret arming of Germany changed the balance of military forces and gave an impulse to a new armament race. Ever since the beginning of 1935, when Nazi Germany restored the German army on the basis of compulsory military service, the relation of forces in Europe has been upset. The presence in the centre of Europe of a tremendous army, powerfully equipped and mechanized, combined with the intensely aggressive character of German fascism, has enhanced the armament race to an unprecedented degree. Fascist Italy, believing itself to be directly menaced by the plans for the annexation of Austria, has carried out a succession of partial mobilizations, as a result of which, today, nearly a million men are under arms. Great Britain, whose leading circles support German armaments, France and all the other European countries, have responded to this provocative arming on the part of Germany by increasing their armed forces.

On the other hand, technical progress itself causes the armies to take on a mass character, for the more complicated the weapons, the greater the number of people required for attending to the needs of the army. Finally, the experience of the war of 1914-18 also demonstrated that the superiority of an army at decisive moments depends to a considerable extent on the number of reserves it possesses. The huge armies of today require equally huge reserves.

This emphasis on the mass character of armies, which is very clearly expressed in the recent bourgeois laws on the military training and mobilization of the whole population, accentuates the contradiction between the mass character of bourgeois armies and the reactionary aims for which these armies are employed by the bourgeoisie. This contradiction becomes still greater with the growth of fascism. It is precisely on account of this fact that the bourgeoisie, not being in a position to lessen the mass character of its army, resorts to the fascization of the latter so as to avoid the danger of mutinies.

The fascization of the army finds expression in a number of measures of an organizational character, especially in the organization of special propaganda in the army itself.

Never has chauvinist propaganda been conducted amongst the soldiers with such intensity and with such a variety of means. In carrying its propaganda into the army, fascism is trying to convert the army into a bulwark for its policy. At the same time, in each of the armies the bourgeoisie increases the number of those elements which it regards as particularly reliable either on account of the privileges granted to them or in consequence of their constant connection with military organizations (for whom service in the army is a profession).

In the German army of 1914 (on the eve of the war) the permanent cadres numbered 145,064 men, *i.e.*, 18 per cent of the total army. In the present German army the number of men permanently serving in the army reaches 397,000 *i.e.*, 30.3 per cent of the total army.

In Italy and the other fascist countries, the military-fascist detachments organized for the purpose of civil war are in one form or another points of support for the fascization of the army. The higher command, the officers of the higher ranks, the instructors and certain military-engineering units form the rampart of fascism in the armies of all countries.

In the countries of bourgeois democracy, we must expose this fascization of the army as one of the most dangerous forms of concrete preparation for war. As a counter to this fascization we must, in our consistent and dauntless struggle for peace, develop our anti-fascist work in the army. We shall not surrender the mass of the soldiers to the fascists. All penetration of fascism into the army is a menace to peace. Every effective measure against such penetration helps to defend peace.

The fascists are instilling their anti-proletarian, militarist and chauvinist policy into the army. All the more justification for the working class in the countries of bourgeois democracy to demand that the army be put on a democratic footing by granting the soldiers all political rights. We demand that every soldier should have the right freely to express his opinion on the war propaganda that is being conducted in the army by the fascists, that he should have the possibility both inside and outside the army of expressing his desire for peace. We demand that all political rights should be granted to the soldiers because we are convinced that an unfettered expression of the will of the soldiers can hinder the war plans of the bourgeoisie and fascism.

For the same reason we demand that the fascist officers should be dismissed from the army and that the reactionary general staffs should

be subjected to democratic control, in the exercise of which workers' organizations should participate.

We put forward these demands in order to hinder in every possible way the advance of fascism where it is not in power. The very development of our policy of the united proletarian front and People's Front demands it.

"A revolutionary army and a revolutionary government are two sides of the same medal. They are two institutions equally necessary for the success of the uprising and for the consolidation of its results. They are two slogans which must be advanced and explained as the only consistent revolutionary slogans."¹

It is impossible to speak seriously of the formation of a government of the united front and People's Front in order to bar the way to fascism without at the same time raising the question of transforming the present bourgeois army into a people's army, organized on the basis of the closest contact with the people, of a reduction in the term of military service, of measures for placing all arms at the disposal of the people and ousting for good the reactionary cadres from the army, especially from the higher commanding positions. The purpose of all these measures is to destroy one of the bulwarks of fascism and to curb its war preparations.

At the present moment, therefore, these measures are particularly useful and necessary in those countries of Europe where an attack by German National-Socialism is threatening and where the prospect of a war of national liberation is a real one. In such circumstances the boldest measures for the democratization of the army are absolutely essential. A war of national liberation waged by any small country against German National-Socialism can be victorious only if that country's army is permeated by a revolutionary spirit.

Our principal task, therefore, is to link the army with the people. We fight in defence of all partial demands of the soldiers—demands which have been the starting point of all movements that have taken place in recent times among the masses of soldiers in bourgeois armies.

In fascist countries, every effort must be made to utilize even the slightest opportunities for legal and semi-legal activity linking the people, and especially the working class, with the masses of the soldiers. We must penetrate into and work within all mass organizations which serve for the militarization of the youth.

¹ V. I. Lenin, "Revolutionary Army and Revolutionary Government," *Selected Works*, Vol. III.

In this connection, the point in the theses of the Sixth Congress stating that Communists must not call upon young workers to join voluntary organizations for military training must be interpreted in a broad fashion. In the present circumstances, it would be a mistake not to join such organizations in all countries in which they have assumed a mass character. We must enter these organizations, we must work in them.

This in general applies also to the organization of defence against air attack, where we must correct the mistake of some Communist Parties which have adopted decisions for boycotting defence against air attack. We must regard the gas mask as a weapon of war just like any other. The workers must learn to make use of this weapon too. In connection with this question, too, we should put forward a number of immediate demands for the masses. For instance, we must demand that there be no difference in the quality of the gas masks which are bought by the rich and those within the reach of the workers' purchasing power. We must demand that the best gas masks be distributed free of charge among the working people. We must protest against the fact that it is only in the houses of the rich that gas shelters are being built, and so on. We must combine all our work in this direction with the propaganda and the fight against war and for peace.

This new approach towards our work in the army, as mass work, with a definite, positive content, aiming at creating a counter-balance to fascism in the army, is the best prerequisite for the practical application of the Bolshevik line at the moment when war breaks out. Communists should not call on the masses to boycott or refuse military service, but must join the army and make it the centre of their work. In view of the reality of the menace of war and in the light of certain errors which have been committed, by the Italian Communist Party, for instance, we must repeat and stress here this Bolshevik standpoint. We are not anarchists. Boycott of mobilization, boycott of the army, sabotage in the factories, refusal of military service, and so on, these are not our methods of fighting war, because they detach us from the masses and can only help the bourgeoisie to strike still more savagely at the Communist vanguard.

X. THE FIGHT FOR PEACE AND THE FIGHT FOR REVOLUTION

Comrades, I am coming to the conclusion of my report.

In 1907, at the Stuttgart Congress of the pre-war Second International, a resolution was adopted on the struggle against war. This

resolution was passed with an amendment proposed by Lenin and Rosa Luxemburg, formulated as follows:

"If war should nevertheless be declared they (the Socialist Parties—*E.*) must strive to end it as speedily as possible and must exert every effort to utilize the economic and political crisis caused by the war to arouse the political consciousness of the masses and to hasten the downfall of the rule of the capitalist class."

As the continuers of all that was Marxist and revolutionary in the old, pre-war Second International, we incorporate the text of this amendment in the resolution on the struggle against war which we are putting before the Seventh Congress of the Communist International.

Nevertheless, one must clearly realize the essential difference that exists between the situation confronting us today and that of the labour movement at the time of the Stuttgart Congress, when this amendment was adopted. It is sufficient to point out that in 1907 reformism and centrism were already dominating forces in the old, pre-war Second International, a fact that was bound to lead to the collapse of August 4, when the leaders of Social-Democracy, almost without exception, adopted the standpoint of defence of the bourgeois fatherland.

Only one party, the Bolshevik Party, endeavoured to utilize the economic and political crisis created by the war in order to hasten the downfall of the rule of the capitalist class; it launched the slogan of transforming the imperialist war into a civil war against the bourgeoisie and waged a consistent struggle for giving effect to this slogan. It is this example of the Bolshevik Party that we shall follow ourselves and which we shall call upon the working class to follow.

But what is the situation at the present day? The numerically small Bolshevik Party of 1914 has become a great and glorious Party which holds power in the U.S.S.R., a Party which has become the leading Section of the Communist International. Thanks to the splendid victories of the Bolshevik Party, the Party of Lenin and Stalin, the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, where socialism has irrevocably triumphed, has grown and become strong. The Communist International has Sections in all the big capitalist countries and in the majority of the colonial countries. In the course of sixteen years of struggle against the bourgeoisie, against Social-Democracy, against Right and "Left" opportunism, all the Sections of the Communist International have become steeled. The Seventh Congress demonstrates

the unparalleled ideological consolidation of our International. In some countries, our Sections are already on the way to becoming real, Bolshevik mass parties.

The teaching of Lenin and Stalin on the struggle against imperialist war is not only being profoundly studied by the international Communist movement, but has already found its practical application on a number of occasions in the post-war years. During the wars which have taken place during these years, many of our Parties have stood the test of battle. The struggle conducted by our French and German comrades during the occupation of the Ruhr, the heroic activity of our Japanese Party during the Japanese seizure of Manchuria and the attack on Shanghai, are examples which we can proudly show to the working class. Finally, our Chinese Party has shown its ability not only to struggle against war but to organize and conduct a revolutionary war under the most difficult conditions. (*Applause.*)

Can we assert on the basis of this experience, that there will be no waverings or mistakes in our ranks if war breaks out? It would be imprudent to draw such a conclusion, because we know that the outbreak of war is just the very moment when the bourgeoisie strives its utmost to exert its influence over the working class, the moment when the Communist vanguard encounters a number of enormous difficulties. But what we can assert is that, in contradistinction to 1914, there will be in all countries not a few isolated comrades, but a solid and disciplined vanguard which will remain true to the revolutionary teachings of Marxism-Leninism and will strive its utmost to apply these teachings in practice by following the example of the Russian Bolsheviks. This is a major fact, the full importance of which the bourgeoisie will very soon understand.

But today, on the eve of the second cycle of revolutions and wars, the situation of the bourgeoisie itself differs profoundly from that of 1914. The power of the ruling classes was then still so firm that the bourgeoisie were able to govern everywhere by methods of parliamentary democracy. Today, the capitalist world is so shaken by the decades of the general crisis and by the years of the world economic crisis that profound instability prevails in all the capitalist states. The fascist dictatorship to which the bourgeoisie resort so as to consolidate their power intensifies all the contradictions of capitalism and renders the class struggle in all countries acute to the highest degree. War may break out just at a time when the discontent of the masses with the capitalist order of society is becoming general and is extending

widely among the middle sections; at a time when "the idea of storming the citadel of capitalism is maturing in the minds of the masses," at a time when the example of the U.S.S.R. is raising the ever-growing prestige of socialism to unprecedented heights. In Asia, Africa, South America, one can already hear the reverberations of the uprisings of the colonial peoples.

But what will the new war be like? Leading military men, scientists and novelists have tried to depict the horrors of mechanized war, of chemical and bacteriological war. We refrain from making any predictions because the most sensational discoveries are being kept secret and because it is difficult to conceive the degree of barbarity which the bourgeoisie will reach. The "petty" wars which have been fought during recent years in South America between the vassal states of Great Britain and the United States afford an appalling example. Paraguay, which has a population of a million, had 50,000 killed; Bolivia, with three and a half million inhabitants, had 70,000 killed; terrible figures compared with the corresponding losses of the big capitalist states during the World War. The war between these little countries stopped because its horrors were so great that the whole population rose in revolt to put an end to it. And this was only a "petty" affair!

We cannot foresee what will take place when the most perfected means of destruction are brought into play on a mass scale. We know only that the next war will be a general war of all countries, a war in which there will be no distinction between front and rear, a war of destruction of everything which makes the life of a modern civilized nation possible. The next war will be a war against the workers, against women and children; it will be a war of extermination. It will be a fascist war.

The World War had lasted two or three years before there were cases of mass revolts of soldiers at the front and of the population in the rear. The bourgeoisie must not blame us if this time the interval is much shorter, and we realize that we shall be performing the greatest service to mankind in making it still shorter. The most objective examination of the international situation and the mass movement, and of their perspectives, inevitably brings us to the conclusion that for all capitalist countries the beginning of the war will mean the beginning of a revolutionary crisis; and during this crisis we shall fight strenuously at the head of the masses to transform the imperialist war into a civil war, we shall fight for revolution and for the conquest of power. (*Applause.*)

But this prospect, comrades, does not at all mean that we have an easy problem to solve.

"The victory of revolution never comes by itself. It has to be prepared for and won. And only a strong proletarian revolutionary party can prepare for and win victory."¹

These words of Comrade Stalin, the leader of the international proletariat, acquire deep significance especially now, when we speak of our tasks in case of the outbreak of a new world war.

The difficulties which we encounter in our work at present will be but a trifle compared with those which will confront us when we have to fight against the bourgeoisie under war conditions.

What became of the grand revolt of French soldiers after the massacre at Chemin des Dames? What came of the defeat and collapse of the Italian army at Caporetto in 1917? The defeat of the bourgeoisie and even the disintegration of the bourgeois army do not yet spell victory for the revolution. The Bolsheviks were able to convert the defeat of the bourgeoisie and the disintegration of the tsarist army into the victory of the revolution only because they were connected with the masses of the soldiers and the masses of the people, because their political line expressed the most profound aspirations of these masses.

Only the Bolsheviks proved capable of acquitting themselves of the task of leading the masses at the moment of extreme accentuation of all class contradictions.

And here I would like to return to the question with which I started. During the last century, approximately up to the nineties, when the workers' movement was led directly by Marx and Engels, the working class had to elaborate its stand on the problem of war under conditions when the bourgeoisie in a number of countries was still playing a progressive role connected with the development of the bourgeois-democratic revolution. Only after taking these conditions into account did Marx and Engels, in each separate case, determine their attitude to a particular war.

With the inception of imperialism, this progressive role of the bourgeoisie disappeared, and the wars of the bourgeoisie changed in character and became imperialist wars. Those who have not understood this change and this transformation have committed serious mistakes and crimes against the working class.

¹ J. Stalin, *Report to the Seventeenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.) on the Work of the Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.)*

The existence of the Soviet Union is a new factor of world-historic significance which introduces radical modifications in the character of the entire contemporary period of development. All our tactics in case of war must be determined by taking this factor into consideration. Already in the theses of the Sixth Congress of the Communist International it was declared that in case of war against the Soviet Union the slogan of fraternization must give place to the slogan of going over to the side of the Red Army. In the theses of the Sixth World Congress it is stated that in case of an imperialist war against the Soviet Union

“...the tactics and the choice of the means of struggle must be determined not only by the interests of the class struggle in their own country, but by the interests of the war at the front, which is a class war of the bourgeoisie against the proletarian state.”

In the resolution which we are putting before the Seventh Congress, we make these instructions still more precise by pointing out that *in case of a counter-revolutionary war against the Soviet Union, the Communists must call on all the working people to help by every means and at any price to bring about the victory of the Red Army against the imperialist armies. (Applause.)*

I think this line of policy is sufficiently clear; it corresponds to the feelings of millions of working people. And if anyone asks us what is the meaning of this line of policy and how we shall act in the various specific conditions of war, there is only one reply we can give: in each case we shall act as Marxists, as Bolsheviks; in other words, we shall begin by an exact appraisal of the concrete situation, of the character of the incipient war, of the relations of class forces at each given moment, of the extent of our forces and the forces of our adversaries; and on the basis of an exact appraisal of the position we shall draw our conclusions as to our immediate perspectives and the concrete forms of our work. We shall never lose sight of the fact that one of the chief virtues of a Bolshevik is the ability to combine the utmost loyalty to principles with the utmost capacity of manœuvring and the utmost flexibility.

Take the example of our comrades of the Chinese Red Army. As a result of a sustained drive by the reactionary troops they found themselves in a situation which seemed hopeless. And yet, by temporarily abandoning the provinces which they could no longer hold, they succeeded in shifting the struggle to other districts and winning larger

and stronger positions than those they had held previously. The remarkable feature in this heroic 3,000 kilometre march of the Chinese Red Army through the provinces of Central China, apart from the heroism of its participants, is their outstanding political maturity and the flexibility of their manœuvres. (*Applause.*) Only a party educated in a Bolshevik spirit could conceive and carry through such a truly Leninist manœuvre. May our Parties be able to show the same Bolshevik qualities in time of war! May our Parties henceforth work to acquire them! It is precisely from this angle that they should analyze their weaknesses and subject them to criticism.

I would like to say, for instance, to our comrades of the Communist Party of Germany: Are you sufficiently connected with the masses of young workingmen whom German fascism is getting ready to convert into cannon-fodder? No, you are not yet sufficiently connected with these masses of the youth, nor with the workers of your munition plants, nor with the peasants of your villages; you cannot be sure that when war breaks out these masses will take the path of Liebknecht and Luxemburg, which you are pointing out to them. You have an enormous task ahead of you, the difficult and truly Bolshevik task of wresting these masses from the influence of chauvinism.

I would like to say to our Spanish comrades: we applauded you because we know that your men fought with true valour at the barricades. But you, who so recently passed through the fire of civil war, would, perhaps, have performed a greater service to all the Parties of the Communist International and to our Congress, had you severely criticized the conduct of your organizations during the days of street fighting. You would then, perhaps, have arrived at the conclusion that your organizations did not rise to the level of the teachings of Marx and Lenin on the art of insurrection, that they failed to understand that it was not merely a question of dying like heroes at the barricades, but one of directing the struggle of the masses as a whole, of never losing the initiative and of being able to wrest the leadership from the hands of the wavering elements who are capable only of capitulating at the first sign of difficulties. Had you subjected your actions during the street battles to severe criticism, you would have rendered great help to comrades of other countries in bringing them to understand how difficult it is to transform imperialist war into a civil war against the bourgeoisie, how difficult it is to carry out the tasks with which the Communist Party is confronted during civil war. (*Applause.*)

I would also like to say to our comrades of the French Com-

munist Party: by boldly changing your tactics you have succeeded in raising high our banner in your country. This imposes on you a great obligation, before us as well as before the masses. The class struggle goes on. We must be equal to the tasks which history imposes on us. In case of war these tasks will be extremely difficult, extremely complicated for you. You have revolutionary traditions, the Jacobins of 1793, Robespierre and Carnot, who were able simultaneously to carry on civil war within the country and to beat back the attack of reaction on the frontiers of France. You have the revolutionary traditions of the Paris Commune, which succeeded in raising high the banner of defence of the country by transforming it into the banner of defence of the revolution. But in taking the path of the Commune, we do not want to suffer defeat again, we want to be victorious! For this it is necessary to have the support of the masses of workers, peasants and petty bourgeoisie—of the entire people of France. We must have a firm leadership, a truly Leninist-Stalinist Party, equal to its great historical task.

I would like to say to all the comrades of all the Communist Parties represented here:

Politically, the war will be a very complicated matter; but at the same time it will be a very simple and concrete matter in so far as the conditions in which we shall have to battle and struggle are concerned. Enthusiasm alone will not avail. There will, perhaps, even be no written resolutions. There will be the factory and the trenches, where it will be necessary to decide the most difficult problems without hesitation, for every hesitation will cost us dear. It is therefore necessary from now on to train our Parties, organizations, cadres, every Party member, in the spirit of maximum initiative and personal responsibility. This can only be attained as the result of the widest ideological schooling and the closest contact with the masses.

Today we are a mighty army fighting for peace. We cannot foresee and no one can foresee how long we will be able to continue our struggle for peace. It may be for another year, it may be more, it may be for only a few months. We must be ready at any moment.

Our Congress has mapped out a Leninist line of action; this is already a first guarantee of victory. We have a mighty force, the Bolshevik Party. We have a leader, Comrade Stalin (*applause*), of whom we know that always, in the most difficult moments, he has ever found the line which has led to victory; our leader is Comrade Stalin, who, during the years of civil war, was sent by Lenin to all those fronts where victory seemed to be slipping from the hands of the

working people of the Soviet country. And everywhere, from Perm to Tsaritsin, from Petrograd to the Southern Front, Stalin put the front to rights, dealt the enemy a crushing blow, and assured victory. (Applause.)

The world party of the Bolsheviks and Stalin are the guarantee of our victory on a world scale. Let us close our ranks, comrades, in the fight against imperialist war, for peace, for the defence of the Soviet Union!

Raise high the banner of proletarian internationalism, the banner of Marx, Engels, Lenin and Stalin!

Long live the triumph of the revolution and of socialism throughout the world! (*Prolonged, stormy applause. The delegates rise and cheer Comrade Ercoli. The "Internationale" is sung, followed by cries of greetings from all the delegations.*)

THIRTY-FIFTH TO FORTY-FIRST SITTING

(August 14-17, 1935)

DISCUSSION ON COMRADE ERCOLI'S REPORT;
COMRADE ERCOLI'S REPLY TO THE DISCUSSION

Presiding (by turns): Dolores, Pollitt, Bueno, Ferdi,
Koehler, Wang Ming.

MARTY: I shall begin by calling to mind that on the eve of the last imperialist war we in France used to compare Europe to a powder magazine in which, to use a metaphor of Jaurès, maniacs were walking about with lighted torches. Today the whole world is a powder magazine, and it is the fascist criminals who are walking about with lighted torches.

I. THE POLE OF WAR AND THE POLE OF PEACE IN EUROPE

In our opinion, four essential factors characterize the international situation at the present time:

1. *Unprecedented economic crisis* which for seven years has held the imperialists by the throat, and by that very fact compelled them to increase their efforts to conquer new markets.

2. *Accession to power of fascism in Germany* with all that this event implies in the way of chauvinist incitement and intensified preparation for war.

3. *Development of the revolution in China*, and, parallel with it, Japan's predatory war in China aimed also at the Soviet Union.

4. *Victory of socialism in the Soviet Union*, giving rise to constantly growing contradiction between the two systems: socialist and capitalist.

And thus it is that *hotbeds of war*, some of them already aflame, are appearing all over the imperialist world which is in full decline.

I shall comment upon only one, a very narrow compass of these manifold contradictions and hotbeds of war, namely, that concerning Europe, and, more particularly, the most advanced capitalist countries of Europe. For example, I shall not deal with the Balkan problems separately.

Hitler Fascism—The Main Instigator of War in Europe

1. The Treaty of Versailles satiated—for a time—certain victorious imperialist states, particularly France and Great Britain. But as a result, German imperialism, "this young and powerful beast of prey," has been starved out even more: it was, in fact, deprived of big industrial regions, such as Alsace-Lorraine, Upper Silesia, Danzig, etc.; moreover, all its colonies were taken away. The increased monopolist development of Germany after the war and the growing contradiction between its productive capacity and its possibilities for exporting capital were bound to stimulate its imperialist, annexationist tendencies.

At the present time its tremendous means of production, its powerful industry compel German imperialism to make every effort to regain old and conquer new markets, without which it must suffocate. And that is what it is doing.

2. On the other hand, precisely these predatory treaties of 1919, which intensified Germany's imperialist ambitions still more, offered the fascists an excellent argument for fanning chauvinism to a pitch of frenzy. They ascribed all the misery and all the frightful suffering of the German proletariat and the German working people as a whole to Versailles and French imperialism.

How easy it was made for the fascists to excite the national hatred of the masses of the people, when Germany was compelled to pay in kind tremendous stocks of raw materials, including wood and coal, so precious to industry, and had to deliver locomotives, railway cars and ships! How easy it was to whip up chauvinist sentiment, when the starving working people of Germany, whose children were deprived of the barest necessities, saw milch cows, fruit trees and poultry turned over to the victors!

The Hitler fascists are compelled to want war, because they are the most reactionary agents of German imperialism, and because they must satisfy the intense current of nationalism that they have themselves evoked, developed and intensified. Peace means the death of Hitlerism.

That is why they are again raising the question of the partition of Europe and of the world. That is why they insolently celebrate Krupp's sixty-fifth birthday at the present time. That is why they glorify the "services" of this "cannon king," responsible for such holocausts of war. That is why Germany's enormous production apparatus is at the present time wholly adapted to the frenzied preparation of monstrous massacres of peoples, for which the German General Staff asks only a few months of preparation. That is also why the terror is being redoubled against the revolutionary workers of Germany, against our heroic sister Party, against all resistance to the Nazi dictatorship, in order to safeguard the rear.

*Against Whom Are the Hitlerite Preparations
Primarily Aimed?*

Undoubtedly Austria remains one of the objectives most coveted by Hitlerism; undoubtedly fascist Germany has no intention of allowing French imperialism to digest Alsace-Lorraine, Morocco, Syria and Cameroon in peace. It says so, and is making its preparations accordingly.

But the fascist chauvinist propaganda that cries out "we are a people without room," adds that there is "room in the East." "Towards the East," declared Hitler in his book, *My Struggle*. "Towards the East," echoes Rosenberg in London. The East means, not the gigantic estates of the Prussian landed gentry, but the Soviet Union. It is here above all that Hitler fascism sees the easiest field of expansion. *It hopes thus to kill two birds with one stone*: first, to gain new markets, new bases of support; and second, to strike at and crush the land of the proletarian revolution, the Land of Socialism, the Soviet Union. Thus it hopes that this war against socialism will make it easier to gather the greatest number of imperialist powers around it.

The Socialist Beacon

Now, what does the Soviet Union represent? In May 1921, Lenin wrote:

"Today, it is chiefly through our economic policy that we influence the world revolution.... In this sphere, the struggle has been carried into the world arena. Once this problem is solved, we shall certainly and definitely conquer internationally."¹

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Russian edition, Vol. XXVI.

It was indeed the policy of expropriating the expropriators that as early as 1919 attracted the sympathy of innumerable working people towards the Soviet Union. Today, this sympathy is stronger than ever. It is impossible to prevent the workers and the labouring masses in general in the capitalist world from asking why there is poverty in their countries and well-being in the Soviet Union. It is impossible to prevent them from realizing that it is the overthrow of the rule of capital that is at the bottom of the difference between the two systems. It is impossible to prevent even the intellectuals, even the scientists, from turning towards the Soviet Union, since they see the unprecedented advance of science and culture in the Land of Soviets and their own miserable condition in the capitalist countries, with the possible exception of those engaged in research work for war purposes.

Finally, at a time when the oppression of the colonial peoples is constantly increasing, the free federation of the one hundred and eighty-five nationalities of the Soviet Union is the hope of millions of colonial slaves.

Thus, the building of socialism in the U.S.S.R. exerts enormous power of attraction upon the working people of all countries, and this power of attraction is steadily growing. It is the most powerful explosive that the revolutionary romanticists of long ago could ever have dreamed of for blowing up the regime of exploitation and hunger.

A few more years and the mere portrayal of the well-being and the joy of life in the new, socialist world, the mere presentation of pictorial propaganda and of reports of workers' delegations who have visited the Land of Soviets, will rouse forces that no dike of the old imperialist world will be able to hold back.

The imperialists of the whole world know this, particularly their most chauvinist and most reactionary elements, the fascists. That is why these vultures, which eat out the substance of the people, these slaughterers of the masses in the employ of big capital, are animated by the most savage hatred of the Soviet Union. That is why the most fiendish among them, the Hitlerites, see in the destruction of the Soviet Union a way out of their catastrophic economic situation, see in it the satisfaction of the needs of German imperialism. To them it would mean the destruction of their most dangerous enemy, the Land of Soviets, whose very existence is a constant call to action for the millions of proletarians crushed under the bloody jack-boot of fascist dictatorship. That is why in Europe Hitler Germany is today the principal fomentor of war and instigator of armed struggle against the Soviet Union.

II. THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL FIGHTS FOR PEACE

I should like to demonstrate how and why *the Communist International and the Soviet Union* are formidable strongholds of peace.

The Communist International is fighting for peace and intends to employ all its forces to maintain it.

Why?

1. *Because war implies slaughter and nameless suffering for the working people, and monstrous profits and super-profits for the capitalists.*

For the workers and peasants, the war of 1914-18 meant twenty million dead, thirty million maimed, ruin and devastation of their homes. But for the Krupps and the Schneiders, the Bethlehem Steels and the Vickers it meant super-profits of a magnitude never before attained, amounting to billions. In the United States, for example, the Du Pont Company manufacturing explosives figured its war profits in 1918 at \$1,246,000,000, or 1,130 per cent of the pre-war profits! Numerous public scandals throughout the world, especially in France, Germany and the United States, have furnished sufficient proof that during the last World War, while soldiers guilty of fraternization were summarily shot, the exploiters—in whose interests they were sent to the slaughter—sold “the enemy” the raw materials and the machines he lacked to continue the war against their own country.

And, more recently, in 1934, did not the Senate Inquiry Committee in Washington prove that the Skoda Works—controlled by Schneider—furnished large quantities of arms and ammunition to Hitler to instal his dictatorship? Did not the same Inquiry Committee show the Aircraft Company, the Du Pont Company, etc., at work making large deliveries of airplanes and explosives to Hitler?

Do we not see at the present time the Suez Canal Company cynically calculating that the transit of 120,000 Italian soldiers to Abyssinia yielded it £90,000 in additional profits? This explains the interest of its shareholders in having the largest possible number of Italians slaughtered in Abyssinia, so that more troops may pass through the canal, and dividends be increased.

2. *War necessarily means military dictatorship over the whole country.*

Over the whole country and not merely in a few regions, as in 1914-18. Today it has been factually established that the war of tomorrow will directly affect the entire population. Aerial gas bom-

hardment of big industrial centres *will abolish the old distinction between civilians and the military, between the front and the rear.*

Imperialist war would be tantamount to the complete destruction of democratic liberties, wherever they still exist; it would mean the suppression of the rights of association, of free assembly, of freedom for the labour press, already so restricted. It would mean the destruction of all workers' organizations and a free field for the fascists. It would mean a tremendous increase in the exploitation and oppression of the working class, and systematic requisitions at low prices in the countryside. It would mean a regime of forced labour for the colonial peoples. It would mean the atrocious rule of the gallows, of torture and murder by the fascist gangs, a rule a million times more frightful than that of 1914-18.

That is why we Communists are persistent defenders of whatever remains of democratic liberties—these positions conquered in bitter struggle by the working class, which make it possible for the working class to defend its interests better; that is why we are likewise persistent defenders of peace.

In countries of fascist dictatorship, war would mean veritable slavery for the working people, would aggravate still more the frightful regime they are subjected to, and tax their strength in war production beyond all human endurance.

3. *Who paid and who is paying the costs of the imperialist war of 1914-18?*

Those who were sent to the slaughter by the bourgeoisie and by the abominable treason of the Social-Democratic Party—the working people, whether their countries were among the victors or the vanquished. It is they who today are still paying all the costs through their reduced wages and crushing taxes.

Even those whom the bourgeoisie wanted to chain to its cause, the *ex-servicemen*, these war victims with their mangled bodies, burned lungs and blinded eyes, do not escape, for their meagre pensions are being cut still more in all the capitalist countries.

The capitalists, on the contrary—both “victors” and “vanquished”—whose dividends sky-rocketed during the four years of slaughter, have been able to invest gigantic sums in new modernized enterprises which yield them exorbitant profits in spite of the crisis.

In short, the poor have sacrificed everything, and are paying the expenses of a war that served only the interests of their exploiters, whereas the rich have made enormous profits in this gigantic enterprise of destruction.

Imperialist wars are profitable only for the exploiters, for the capitalists; for the proletarians, the toiling masses of all countries, they spell bloodshed and ruin.

That is why the Communists are the most stubborn fighters in defence of peace—for *"they have no interests separate and apart from those of the proletariat as a whole."*

4. *Can the Communists want an imperialist war?*

For many years, however, the Social-Democrats have accused us of wanting war between the imperialists, or even against the Soviet Union, so that war might bring about *revolution*, as they said. As if the Communist Parties *throughout the world* had not always fought energetically against imperialist war!

As if the Communist International, which itself issued from the struggle against war and against anti-Soviet intervention, had not fought vigorously and successfully for peace throughout its glorious past! It was particularly in 1923, when the occupation of the Ruhr brought Europe to the brink of war, and when the Second International rejected our proposals for a fighting united front, that the Social-Democrats levelled this slanderous charge against us. As if our French Communist Party had not achieved brilliant successes in the struggle against imperialist war!

As if the ranks of our French Party did not include many a one who, during the last slaughter of nation against nation, and particularly in 1917 and 1918, participated in and led the great revolutionary strikes and military mutinies of those Red years.

As if our French Party did not count the following as its most glorious pages, pages covering precisely this field of anti-war struggle waged in pursuance of the directives of the Communist International: 1921—the struggle against calling up the military service class that was to *"seize Germany by the throat"*; 1923—the struggle against the occupation of the Ruhr, and for the fraternization of the French soldiers with the German proletarians; 1925—the general strike of October 12 against the war in Morocco and in Syria, and the support of the peoples of those countries in their fight for freedom; and 1927-29—the struggle against the French reactionaries' threats of war.

These facts answer the deliberate libels of those who supported the imperialism of their own country at each of these periods. They answer the lies of those who claim that we want war, for they call to mind the great work performed by our Party to have the French

soldiers that were sent to the Ruhr and into the Rhineland fraternize with the working people of Germany against their own militarists and warmongers, as a result of which our Political Bureau, with Marcel Cachin at its head, was arrested for "endangering the external security of the state."

In no country of the world have Communists hesitated to sacrifice their health, their liberty, and even their lives in this struggle against the danger of imperialist war.

The U.S.S.R.—a Fortress of Peace

A handful of renegades, with the contemptible Doriot leading the procession, are trying to injure the Soviet Union by repeating exactly what Hitler says against it. They accuse it of wanting war.

As if the Soviet Union could be anything else than a force for peace!

Lenin called to mind Clausewitz's words: "War is the continuation of politics by other means." Now, what policy can an imperialist state pursue? Evidently the policy that is fixed by the only law governing it, the law of the quest for profits, that is, the policy of imperialist expansion which inevitably leads to armed conflict.

Now, the quest for profits does not exist in the Soviet Union, because it is the Land of Socialism. If a capitalist country had constructed a one-hundredth part of a Magnitogorsk plant or a Turkestan-Siberian railway, speculators would have made millions! That is why the U.S.S.R., precisely because of its economic and social structure, cannot want any expansion, any war.

In the Soviet Union capitalism has disappeared. The general aims of the country's policy are fixed in a clear and precise manner both by the Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks) and by the Congress of Soviets. The decisions are published, broadcast over the radio, printed in millions of copies. And our great Comrade Stalin reminds us of them whenever the occasion requires it. He himself sees to it that they are realized. The U.S.S.R. aims at the steady improvement of the well-being of the whole working population, the building of classless society, the advance towards communism, with our old motto as its final goal: From each according to his abilities, to each according to his needs.

That is why the Soviet Union, whose entire strength is concentrated upon attaining these basic goals, cannot but want peace, because peace assures it the opportunity of continuing its tremendous social transformation, unique in the history of mankind.

By its socialist construction and development the Soviet Union aids the world proletariat, aids the colonial peoples. That is why it has become the fatherland of the working people of the whole world, the free federation towards which so many oppressed nations are striving, that is why it arouses such violent hatred in the hearts of the imperialists of the whole world.

Yesterday Ercoli went over the most important stages of this peace policy, starting with the appeal of the Second Congress of Soviets entitled, "To All Peoples and to All Belligerent Governments," issued on November 7, 1917, the very night power was seized.

Moreover, has not the Soviet Union often demonstrated its desire for peace? I shall add but two arguments to those given yesterday by Ercoli. Was not the Soviet Union the first to make a concrete and precise proposal for universal, simultaneous and controlled disarmament in 1927 at Geneva? When this was rejected, did it not on several subsequent occasions make proposals for partial disarmament which were always received with sarcasm?

Soviet ambassadors have been assassinated: Vorovsky in Switzerland, Voikov in Warsaw; others have been deported like criminals, even from Paris. The imperialists arrest Soviet consuls and other Soviet citizens, as, for example, the railwaymen in Manchuria. Armed forces have violated the territory of the Soviet Union on several occasions. What country would have displayed such patience in face of such provocation? Not a single one. The Bey of Algiers' blow with a fan in the face of an envoy of the French government sufficed to put Algeria to the sword for fifty years and drench her lands with blood. The pretext for France's declaration of war upon Germany in July 1870 was the fact that one evening King William had declined to receive the French Ambassador.

Here then is a proved fact: Peace is in the interest of the proletariat, which is in power in the Soviet Union. It could not be otherwise. And because peace is also in the interest of the working people of the entire world, the Soviet Union has made enormous sacrifices in the cause of peace, sacrificing even the lives of its best sons.

III. RELATIONS BETWEEN THE SOVIET UNION AND FRANCE

Thus, Hitler fascism constitutes the principal hotbed of war in Europe—while the Soviet Union, the Land of Socialism, constitutes the main force for peace.

The French bourgeoisie is not interested in war at the present time. The victory it won in 1918 has enabled it to accumulate immense riches, and has ensured it hegemony in capitalist Europe.

But the French bourgeoisie knows full well that it defeated its German rival only after fifty-two months of war, and only with the considerable aid of the most powerful imperialist countries in the world. It realizes that it would be very difficult for it to resist successfully a powerfully equipped fascist Germany, whose population is one and a half times as large as its own.

On the other hand, the ruling classes of France realize that there exists a formidable power, the Soviet Union, which has become one of the most highly industrialized countries in the whole world, and whose military strength is correspondingly great. This power wants peace to be maintained and has proved that it does so. Moreover, the proletariat and the masses of the population of France sympathize profoundly with the Land of Soviets, and see in its peace policy a bulwark of universal security. Hence, France turns towards the Soviet Union.

Is it not logical, therefore, that the Soviet Union, which puts the defence of peace above everything, should unhesitatingly sign a pact of mutual assistance with capitalist France?

Should Imperialist Contradictions Be Utilized?

True enough, the interests that lead the French bourgeoisie to peace serve altogether different ends from those desired by the Soviet Union. But why should the former not support states that are interested in peace for other reasons than it itself is? We, French Communists, know very well that French imperialism does not seek to promote the interests of the working people, but to maintain itself in power. But we also know very well that the labouring masses of France and of the whole world cherish peace as their dearest possession, and that is why our Political Bureau from the very start took a public stand in favour of the Franco-Soviet Pact of Mutual Assistance.

Certain renegades criticize this mutual assistance pact, *this understanding reached for a definite purpose between the proletarian*

government and an imperialist government. As if the interests of the labouring masses required that the U.S.S.R. place itself in "splendid isolation"! Over and over again, Lenin and Stalin have explained to us how it was that the Land of Soviets could be victorious in 1918, 1919 and 1920:

1. Because of the absolute devotion of the workers and peasants to their Soviet form of government, because of the absolute devotion and supreme heroism of the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army.

2. Because of the aid of the international proletariat.

3. Because of the split in the camp of the imperialists.

No worker would ever understand why the Soviet Union should pursue a policy that would weld all its enemies into a single block against it. But the workers understand very well the duty of the proletarian state, emphasized by Lenin, to make use of the contradictions between the bourgeoisies of the various countries. And that is why the Soviet Union was perfectly right in signing the mutual assistance pact with French imperialism.

But here these same renegades declare: "Only the action of the proletariat is a true guarantee of peace." That is correct and obvious.

Unfortunately, however, we are not yet strong enough in the capitalist countries to guarantee peace. Despite the magnificent and heroic struggle of our sister Party, who can guarantee that the German proletariat will be strong enough to restrain Hitler's arm? No one, obviously. Therefore the common people can only view with approval that the Soviet Union throws its tremendous weight into the scales in favour of guaranteeing peace through its pacts with France and Czechoslovakia, pacts open to all states and hence a threat to none.

No matter how limited the duration of such pacts may be, no matter how doubtful their application by bourgeois states in case of an anti-Soviet war, they are nevertheless important means of hindering, to a certain extent, a new imperialist world war. And thus they serve the interests of the world proletariat and of the working people of all countries.

Who Is Attacking the Pact?—The Opponents of the Struggle for Peace

This consistent peace policy of the U.S.S.R. obviously does not satisfy everybody. In France, especially, important capitalist groups have not abandoned hope of resuming the attempt, frustrated in 1918-20, to overthrow Soviet power by force of arms and colonize the

land. Their fascist agents, who vociferously display a spurious patriotism, bellow with might and main against the Land of Soviets, at the same time carrying on extensive negotiations with Hitler, from whom they expect material and monetary aid for their subversive activities in France. Let us note right here that this anti-Soviet campaign inspired by Hitler indicates how much the Franco-Soviet Pact is hampering the war policy of the Nazis. And therefore they have not been slow to attack this pact violently.

Comrade Stalin's Declaration

Recall the contents of the communiqué broadcast from Moscow after the negotiations with Laval. First of all it stated:

"The representatives of the Soviet Union and of France were able to convince themselves that their constant efforts in all diplomatic undertakings that had been contemplated clearly aimed at the same principal goal—the maintenance of peace by the organization of collective security."

This is only the acknowledgement of a fact that I have already explained at length: the Soviet Union's will for peace, and France's desire to maintain peace, because at the moment France is not interested in war.

The communiqué continues:

"They [the representatives of the Soviet Union and of France] were in complete agreement to recognize the obligations which arise out of the present international situation and are incumbent upon the states sincerely interested in the maintenance of peace. . . . It is particularly their duty, in the interest of the maintenance of peace, not to allow any weakening of the present state of their national defence. In this connection M. Stalin understands and fully approves the national defence policy carried out by France in order to maintain its armed forces at a level that will ensure its security." (*Le Temps*, May 17, 1935.)

Revolutionary Defence

As for the Soviet Union, no worker can doubt that it is the essential duty of the Soviet proletariat to organize its security. Defence of the revolution is the first elementary duty of the proletariat in power. Ercoli reminded us of what Lenin wrote on this subject long before the

imperialist war. Was it not Jaurès himself, a reformist but devoted to the working class and a sincere enemy of war, who wrote:

“The people that first enters socialism will immediately see the frantic reactionary powers hurl themselves upon it. It would be lost if it were not itself ready to take up the sword, to answer shell for shell, in order to give the working class of other countries time to organize and rise in their turn . . .” (*Petite République*, July 24, 1897.)

The need for a workers' and peasants' Red Army properly equipped for modern warfare is obvious to every honest worker. The bourgeoisie, the French bourgeoisie in particular, is only wasting its time in heaping sarcastic comment upon the fact that the Communists of all countries, including the French Communists, admire the development of the Red Army.

Let us now examine the part of the communiqué that concerns France.

By virtue of the defensive pact of mutual assistance, the Soviet Union lends its great economic and military power to secure the French people against Hitler aggression. The Soviet Union is justified, therefore, in demanding reciprocity from the French government; without it the pact that it signed would be nothing but a fool's bargain for the working people of the Soviet Union and of the whole world.

The overwhelming majority of the working people of France have understood that quite well. True enough, it cannot be denied that for a short time the French Party had certain misgivings. But a few days after the communiqué was read by Laval in Moscow, an informative meeting of five thousand active members and sympathizers of the Party from the five Paris regions unanimously (except for one opposing vote and seven abstaining) approved the line of our Central Committee, which vigorously supported the pact and Comrade Stalin's declaration. What is more, the elections to the General Council took place in the Department of the Seine ten days later. Their results were an endorsement of the peace policy of the U.S.S.R., and of the policy of the French Communist Party.

It is precisely because of the growth of the anti-fascist trend in France that there is widespread anxiety in the country respecting the Nazi armaments. The security of the country against the Hitlerite bandits is the main concern of the working people. This applies in the first place to the middle classes, that is, the very numerous urban petty bourgeoisie, the peasants and the intellectuals. And this is all the

more so because these sections of the population forget or overlook the existence of a revolutionary proletariat in Germany, of a Communist Party that lives and fights heroically in the face of frightful terror.

Now these very important sections see that the great Land of Soviets is taking a hand to ensure peace, using all its economic and military might to that end. The Soviet Union and the Party that leads it, the Party of the Bolsheviks, now appear to them in a different light.

And, naturally enough, the French Communists also benefit by this fact. Hence, the more favourable reception accorded to our campaigns and our slogans.

It is obvious that the big bourgeoisie of France and the French fascists are going to try and are already trying to make use of this situation to intensify their nationalist and chauvinist propaganda. It will thus be our task to redouble our efforts so that on all occasions effective solidarity with the German proletariat may be achieved, and the struggle against the Hitler executioners, the allies and counsellors of the French fascists, developed.

For example, in the demonstrations against the swastika flag on German ships, we must never forget not only to demonstrate against the fascist flag, but also for Thaelmann, in order to show the German seamen that it is not they whom we are booing, but the hangmen of the German proletariat. (*Applause.*)

The peace policy of the Soviet Union, outlined and applied by our great Comrade Stalin, thus becomes apparent not merely as the correct policy but also as a powerful aid in rallying the toiling masses of France against fascism. It is rendering a new and inestimable service to the proletariat of all countries.

IV. THE ATTITUDE OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF FRANCE

The reactionary bourgeoisie, certain Social-Democratic leaders and the renegades claim that ever since the mutual assistance pact was concluded there has been a contradiction between the policy of the Soviet Union, that is, the policy of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union, and that of the Communist Party of France, for the latter is voting against war credits and the prolongation of the term of military service, and is fighting against the militarization of the youth and of the whole civilian population which is carried out under the pretext of holding anti-gas attack manœuvres.

What is the position of the French Communist Party?

We outlined it clearly in the appeal that our Central Committee signed this April together with nine other Parties, Sections of the Communist International, from which I quote the following:

"In case of counter-revolutionary war against the fatherland of socialism, we shall apply every means to support the Red Army of the Soviet Union. . . . We shall fight for the defeat of every power that wages war against the Soviet Union."

That is the line we shall follow in every case, and that is why we have supported and shall continue to support the Franco-Soviet Mutual Assistance Pact concluded in defence of peace.

We Communists cannot trust the bourgeoisie to apply the pact.

But just because we are and have been ardent defenders of the pact, we Communists do not at all feel confident that the French bourgeoisie will apply it, and trust the present French Cabinet still less to do so. Does not the communiqué issued after the negotiations with Laval state:

"The Soviet and French representatives confirmed, on the other hand, their determination to neglect nothing, in pursuance of their collaboration, that may strengthen, with the aid of all governments acting in solidarity, the policy of peace, *of improving the political conditions*, the only policy capable of establishing the confidence between nations that is indispensable for the development of the moral and material interests of the European community."

Now, the Laval government is not improving the political conditions necessary for restoring confidence. On the contrary. It does not pursue a consistent peace policy internationally. For the agreements which Laval signed at Rome have given fascist Italy a free hand in Abyssinia.

And the Communists do not intend to renounce the absolute independence of the working class, which we shall never lead to conclude a civil peace with the capitalists.

Moreover, how was the pact signed?

The French government wanted to gratify two of the deepest aspirations of the working people of France: love of peace and love of the Soviet Union. The labouring masses of France are, in fact, eagerly following everything that takes place in the Soviet Union. They attach inestimable value to everything that comes from the Land of Soviets. They are filled with enthusiasm over the successes of

socialist construction. They manifest their profound solidarity on every occasion. (*Applause.*)

Great French scientists also are among the admirers of the Soviet Union. They see that in the Land of Socialism scientists, seamen, rescuers of the *Chelyuskin* expedition, explorers of the stratosphere, are national heroes, whereas in France public honours and pensions are reserved for fascist colonels, and the foremost Roentgen specialists of Paris hold their consultations in the wooden barracks of the city's hospitals.

It was this solidarity movement, broad enough to comprise all the sections of the population, that exerted pressure on government circles to collaborate with the U.S.S.R. and struggle for peace.

But what guarantees have we that the pact will be put into effect, and that the government will not yield to the attacks of the chauvinist and reactionary elements who advocate union with the Hitlerites?

We have no such guarantees. Moreover, there are many officers who openly carry on fascist propaganda in the French army. The soldier-correspondents of *l'Humanité* report a certain colonel openly making appeals to join the Fiery Cross, and that other officers insult the Red Army of the Soviet Union in their speeches to the soldiers, and call upon their hearers to fight communism.

What guarantees have we that this army will not be thrown against the workers and peasants in battle tomorrow, as has been the case in Belgium, in Geneva, and in the Asturias? The recent events in Brest and Toulon indicate that this must be taken into account. What guarantees have we that the army will cease oppressing and harassing the enslaved peoples of the colonies?

None at all. That is why we are voting against the monstrous war credits, at a time when poverty has never been so great in France for the last thirty-five years.

That is why our Party has set down as one of its most urgent tasks the winning over of the army to the side of the people, both to prevent it from being used against the latter, and to ensure the application of the Franco-Soviet peace pact.

I shall conclude with this question of winning over the army to the side of the people.

In view of the fascist menace in France—a menace that is growing rapidly—the question: “On whose side is the army?” is the subject of considerable controversy at the present time. The fascists—the *Action Française* and the *Croix de Feu* (Fiery Cross), above all—are redoubling their efforts to win over the officers and men, which is one

of the most burning questions of the day in the struggle against fascism and war.

On July 7, in agreement with the organizers of the people's rally of July 14, the Central Committee of the Communist Party of France, through its delegates to the anti-fascist assembly of the Paris districts, proposed the establishment of *soldiers' committees for the defence of the Constitution and the Republic, in order to check the subversive activities of the fascist officers and organizations within the army.*

And at the anti-fascist rally in Paris on July 14 of this year, the Radical deputy Rucart, on behalf of all the groups that participated in its organization, addressed special greetings to the army, calling upon it not to become "*the instrument of a seditious minority but a champion of liberty.*"

The attitude of the Communists towards the capitalist army is well known. The Communists, as Lenin has taught us and as has been specifically restated in the theses of the Sixth Congress of the Communist International, are against a refusal to do military service, are against desertion. They answer the summons to do military service *even in a reactionary war.* They enter the army in order to acquire a thorough knowledge of how to handle weapons, and to combat the chauvinist propaganda there.

The struggle to win the army for the people is directly linked up with the task of winning the youth, whose support the fascists and reactionary elements court even in the schools, where they wage a violent campaign against the teachers and professors, the great majority of whom in France are anti-fascists and union-organized. This offers an excellent opportunity for conducting our work of winning over the youth, and hence the army, to the cause of the people, and we must learn how to make use of this opportunity.

Winning the French army for the people is the best guarantee that it will not be employed against the people; it is the guarantee that 1918 will not happen again, the year when the French army, marching into Germany at the time the proletarian revolution broke out there, dissolved soldiers' councils, as was the case at Mainz, for instance; it is the guarantee that 1919 will not occur again, with its attacks on the Soviets in Hungary and Russia.

V. OUR TASK

Such, then, is our position in the face of the present war danger, particularly the war danger threatening the Soviet Union.

Of course, we understand full well that only the final overthrow of capitalist domination will abolish wars. But if we know how to mobilize the masses, we shall be able to postpone or even prevent an imperialist war, and first of all a military attack upon the Soviet Union.

To the working people of the whole world and particularly of France, preventing this attack, smashing it if it should break out by assuring the victory of the Red Army, does not mean participating in an ordinary anti-capitalist action. The defence of the Soviet Union is the defence of the proletariat's future, of its very life. And that is why we shall do all we can to assure the successful issue of this defence.

The past gives us the greatest hopes for the future. In the years 1918-20 the working people of the Soviet Union, the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army, repulsed the aggression of fourteen imperialist countries. The heroism of the Red Army, of the partisans, of the Red Guards, was admirable. But they all had to learn while fighting, learn the military technique that they had not known before. The weapons of the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army were often antiquated, its means of transport primitive, its commissary intermittent. Industry in the rear was almost entirely disorganized by the imperialist war and the Civil War. Moreover, industrial equipment had decreased enormously. As for the soldiers, the commanders and the political commissars, they were like the soldiers of the Year II of the Great French Revolution.

"They marched and sang

Without fear in their hearts, without shoes on their feet."

And it was under these conditions that our glorious Red Army defeated enemies ten times as strong in numbers, a thousand times better armed, defeated the leading armies of the world! Why? Because in every country in the world, the tremendous prestige of the October Revolution was shaking capitalism to its foundations and, consequently, also its armies composed of workers and peasants!

And that took place at a time when there were practically no Communist Parties in the capitalist countries! The proletarian revolution, moreover, exerted its influence through its prestige rather than its concrete achievements, which could not yet be manifest. Today the Soviet Union is a formidable power. Today the advance of the well-being of its liberated masses of working people has no precedent in history, a fact which cannot be denied and is no longer denied.

Today our Communist Parties exist in sixty-five countries and

many of these Parties have already been steeled and tempered in great heroic struggles. Today a mass movement centres around the French Party, which has not had its peer since the Great French Revolution. That is why every Party, and the French Communist Party in particular, faces obligations even more serious than those it faced at the end of the first round of wars and revolutions.

We know that the Red Army, fully competent and imbued with boundless devotion, will fulfil its duty of defending the country where socialism is in construction. The point is that we, in the capitalist countries, must also prove capable of fulfilling our difficult, our very difficult task.

Armed with the decisions of the Seventh World Congress, enlightened and guided by our great Comrade Stalin, we shall redouble our efforts to correct our weaknesses in rapid, shock-brigade tempo, as the present grave situation demands, in order to be ready to conquer new positions that will assure new victories for socialism! (*The delegates rise. Loud applause.*)

KUUSINEN: Comrades, the clearest and truest utterance on the existing war danger was made by Comrade Stalin at the last Congress of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. At that time he also clearly and strikingly depicted the hopeless confusion, the impasse reached by the imperialist politicians, who, despite the experience of the last World War, which unleashed revolution in a number of countries and led to the victory of the proletariat in Russia, are nevertheless preparing to clutch at war "as a drowning man clutches at a straw." A new world war will again "unleash revolution and put in question the very existence of capitalism in a number of countries," Comrade Stalin said. But in the same speech he also expressed himself in the most vigorous fashion *against all opportunist reliance on spontaneity.*

At our Congress, Comrade Dimitrov has struck a most severe blow at reliance on spontaneity. As you will remember, comrades, his report on the fight against fascism and his reply to the discussion were from beginning to end inspired by this spirit of struggle against reliance on automatism, a spirit which demands the greatest intensification of our Bolshevik activity.

The same basic thought ran through the report of Comrade Ercoli on the tasks of the Communist International in connection with the preparations by the imperialists for a new world war. His report was so detailed and comprehensive that I have very little to add to it.

My remarks in supplement to Comrade Ercoli's report will deal exclusively with one sector of this struggle, namely, the struggle of the youth.

The Condition of the Youth Has Changed

I cannot, however, confine myself to the special struggle of the youth against war. It goes without saying that we must organize campaigns among the youth specially on the question of war, that we must carry on specifically anti-militarist work, and the like. This also is important, just as it is important to organize special anti-fascist campaigns among the youth, and even special anti-fascist fighting organs. But the most important, the *fundamental*, thing is the development of a *general* militant youth movement. Whether we succeed or not in creating a revolutionary or radical youth movement of a strong mass character will be of *decisive* significance both for the fight against the war danger and for the fight against fascism; and in particular it is a question of developing a broad united front movement among the youth.

The question of the struggle against fascism and war is, of course, one of the most important questions of every radical youth movement. If, however, the fight against war and fascism is made the only subject of the program of action of the youth, or if the anti-war or anti-fascist struggle of the youth is organized in a narrow, "departmental" fashion, the widest sections of the youth, as experience has shown, cannot be included, cannot be set in motion. In order to achieve this, a *broad* youth program of action must be drawn up.

This, for instance, has been demonstrated by the experience gained in the work of the International Youth Committee for Struggle Against War and Fascism. This committee has performed no mean work. But the winning of the masses proceeded very slowly as long as the committee confined itself to these two questions. It was not until the International Committee took the initiative of calling a broad youth conference on the basis of a general program for the youth that its actions met with strong response among the masses.

How, comrades, is this circumstance to be explained? By the fact that *during the last few years the condition of the youth has radically changed*. We refer not only to protracted and chronic unemployment. Lack of occupation has already become a mass phenomenon among the youth. Formerly many schools, at least the lower schools, were open to the working-class youth in most of the capitalist countries. Today the schools, and opportunities for education generally, for the

younger members of the working population are becoming more and more limited. Formerly a certain—even if slight—number of the working-class youth had the opportunity of rising out of their class to something “higher,” to the ranks of the petty bourgeoisie, or the petty-bourgeois intelligentsia; in exceptional cases a young worker could become a doctor, architect or teacher. These exceptional cases were sufficient to foster reformist illusions among the greater part of the working-class youth.

Today, on the contrary, entire sections of the working-class youth are becoming *declassed*, that is to say, they no longer have the opportunity of rising even into the class of their fathers; they have no chance at all of finding work, or of learning a trade. These young people are sinking to the level of the *lumpen proletariat*, are falling a prey to hunger, poverty, crime, prostitution, etc.

The bourgeoisie, however, which is unable to provide work for a steadily increasing section of the youth, needs this youth for war purposes. The young people are being driven into barracks and compulsory labour camps.

Today nine-tenths of the younger generation are suffering want in one form or another. *The young generation has become a suffering, oppressed, heavily oppressed, generation.* It forms a new oppressed section of the people. Even the United States, a country where it is alleged that the youth has the greatest opportunities and is relatively well-off, has become a country of colossal unemployment and neglect of the youth.

This circumstance has created the basis on which a very broad People's Front of the youth can develop.

Fascism has been commissioned by the bourgeoisie to infect the neglected youth with its demagogy, and especially with chauvinism. In fact, this situation creates objective opportunities for fascism to carry on its noxious work among the youth. But communism also has far greater opportunities for work among the youth than formerly. The only question is whether we are capable of utilizing these opportunities.

This question cannot be answered off-hand in the affirmative. Of course, I have no doubt that we shall draw up excellent resolutions. We did not draw up bad resolutions before either, but these resolutions were not carried out.

And the resolutions themselves suffered from a certain defect: they were too general, too abstract. We must draw the lesson from this. Comrade Dimitrov has strongly stressed the fact that sectarianism

frequently disguises itself under the cloak of Bolshevik theses. We are not afraid of criticizing this, and in the sphere of the youth movement we have grounds enough for criticism and self-criticism. On this occasion, however, I would like to deal with the positive experiences gained by the Communist youth movement recently in certain countries—principally in France and the United States. Comrade Michal has already dealt with this in part, and Comrades Raymond Guyot and Green in more detail. However, it appears to me not unprofitable to analyze these experiences in greater detail, so that the Young Communist Leagues of all countries may benefit from them. (I have also received instructive information from Comrade Diego, of Spain. But I shall have to forego an analysis of the experiences of the Spanish comrades because I received the information too late.)

The French Experience

The fascists proposed to the masses of the French youth the organization of a "front of the young generation." Our French comrades—Comrade Raymond Guyot and others—accepted this challenge of the fascists. But how did they do this?

Had they been mere doctrinaire propagandists, they would have rejected the very formulation of the question, declaring: there is no problem of the young generation; there is only a class problem, the problem of the oppression of the labouring classes and the youth of these classes.

But the French comrades acted differently. They said: Very well, let us discuss the problem of the present young generation. It is an acute question, a sore question. It is a question of the poverty, oppression and desperate condition of the vast majority of the young generation of today. What is necessary is a fight against this ruthless oppression of the youth. It is absolutely essential that the youth should fight for its rights, for its cause. A front of the young generation must be created. *But against whom?* Who is responsible for the impoverishment of the young generation? Who is exploiting the youth, or throwing them out of employment on to the streets, according to his profit interests? The capitalist, above all, the big capitalist. Who is oppressing and fettering the youth? Who is preventing them from leading a decent human existence? The reactionary bourgeoisie and its machinery of power. Who wants to tie the youth still more frightfully hand and foot? Who wants to bloodily suppress the fight of the youth for their rights? The tools of the reactionary bourgeoisie—the *fascists*,

the people of the "Fiery Cross." Hence, these are the enemies of the youth. It is against them that the front of the young generation must be formed.

This is the way the French comrades put the matter.

The French fascists, on the other hand, declared: for a front of the young generation against the *old* regime and against the *old* parties, including the Communist Party. The fascists raised the banner of a "new" movement and a "new" party, and believed that it would dazzle the youth by its brilliance and enable the fascists to utilize for their own fascist ends the justified hatred of the youth for the old corrupt party system.

But our French comrades declared: Against the old regime, by all means; but fascism represents the oldest and worst regime, a variety of the barbaric feudal regime carried over to modern society. What the interests of the widest sections of the youth urgently demand is a fight against the old regime in conjunction with the Communists; this fight is in accord with the most urgent interests of the young generation. But the only party consistently fighting for the abolition of the old regime, for the abolition of the domination of the possessing classes over the labouring classes—a domination that has prevailed for hundreds and thousands of years—is the Communist Party.

But—the fascists objected—the Communist Party represents the interests of only *one* class, whereas we represent the interests of the entire people and the entire youth.

That is not true—our French comrades retorted—for the interests of the overwhelming majority of the population, who suffer want because they are exploited by a few rich parasites, are the true interests of the people. And it is the interests of all the exploited and oppressed that the Communists are defending. The fascist murder gangs, however, try to strangle the masses of the people who are resisting the yoke of the parasitic finance capitalists, and pretend that this is "a fight in the interests of the people."

Now, was the mode of action of our French comrades right or wrong? Comrades, if any of you should answer: Of course, it was right, I will retort: Right, but *not* "of course." For at that time, last year, when the French comrades began for the first time to approach the youth masses in this way, it was not "of course" at all. On the contrary. Here, for instance, among the leaders of the Young Communist International, it appeared even to some of the best comrades as strange, doubtful, reprehensible. They shook their heads and said in astonishment: What sort of language is this—"a front of the young

generation"? That is not our Communist language, it is a slogan borrowed from the fascists....

That was, of course, a complete misunderstanding. Our French comrades only utilized the *form* of stating the matter as used by the fascists in order to give it a *truly revolutionary content*. And precisely because they were not afraid of using this form of stating the matter, but took up the controversy provoked by the fascists before the youth masses, they succeeded in wresting the sword from the hand of the fascists and in turning it *against* fascism.

It was precisely this art of parrying every thrust of the fascist demagogues that was formerly so feebly developed among our young comrades in Germany.

Our French comrades, when speaking to the youth masses, were also able to give the right answer to the question: *what* must the youth fight for?

For the elementary material demands of the present day, or for the great ideals of the future?—this false contrast has in many countries been a constant stumbling-block in Communist agitation among the youth, with the result that our Young Communist Leagues have not come out with complete convincingness *either* for the immediate, day-to-day demands of the youth, *or* for their great aims of the future. The false impression has persisted among large numbers of the youth that the reformists, and even the priests, are more concerned about the daily needs of the youth masses than the Communists, and that the fascist demagogues are better able than the Communists to offer them prospects for an attractive and alluring future.

Our young comrades in France, however, realized the importance of this, and understood the art of organically combining the day-to-day demands of the youth with the revolutionary aims of the youth movement. Among the Socialist youth, the Republican and Catholic youth, as well as at mass meetings of the unemployed youth, they met with an enthusiastic response when they declared:

The entire youth, which is suffering want and injustice, must rise in a common fight. Let us fight for our rights, the *rights of youth!* We have the right to live, but even this most elementary of human rights is denied us by the ruling capitalists and profiteers. We demand immediate assistance, immediate employment. We have a right to vocational training, a right to education in general. This right, too, is now being systematically curtailed and withdrawn. We demand that immediate measures be taken by the government against this. We demand that the burden of the crisis be shifted from the backs of the

working people to the backs of the money kings, to the backs of those who are profiting by the crisis. We, the young generation, demand the right to a better, a happy future. We do not want to allow France to be Hitlerized. We want the dissolution of the fascist murder gangs. We want to fight for peace among nations. And therefore we must carry on a determined struggle in our country against the fascists and reactionary militarists who are preparing for a new world war and a criminal civil war against the French working class.

It was in this spirit that the French Young Communist League acted, and it succeeded in starting a mass united front youth movement. This action of the young comrades in France has been criticized, and criticized from the standpoint of old doctrinaire formulas. You have omitted to emphasize—it was said—that it is impossible under capitalism to achieve any demands for improvements in the condition of the working-class youth. This is an omission of fundamental importance, an opportunist deviation—the strict critics averred.

But the French young comrades held a different opinion, and quite rightly. They said: No, it *is possible* to achieve certain improvements in the condition of the youth, provided large masses of the youth can be roused to undertake a common and determined struggle. And it is for us to see to it that they do so; that depends first and foremost on *us*, on the energy we display, and on whether we pursue the right tactics. Inspired by this truly Bolshevik determination, the young comrades of France approached the masses of the unemployed youth and put the following before them:

Winter is approaching, comrades. You know what sufferings it will entail. Shall we endure these torments like timorous slaves? No! We cannot and will not live through the coming winter as we have lived hitherto. If you agree, we call upon you to *act* immediately. Send mass deputations to the Minister of Labour at once! Send a deputation even to Geneva, to the League of Nations! Organize immediately mighty demonstrations in the streets of Paris! We young people must fight for our right to live. Only in this way can we achieve any amelioration of our condition. And we shall fight like lions. We shall show the rich bankers and the other hyenas of the crisis, the gentlemen of the Comité des Forges and their ilk, that the French youth refuse to be slaves. *Let the old world tremble, for we, the young generation, are rising!*

By acting in this way, our young French comrades at this stage *politically defeated* fascism in the eyes of the youth masses. The fascists lost the taste for talking about “the front of the young genera-

tion"; they retreated like dogs, their tails between their legs. (*Loud applause.*)

Last year, this "French method of fighting" fascism was still *something new*. At that time it demanded great political courage and independence on the part of our comrades. For those comrades in the leadership of the Young Communist International who at first did not understand the language of the French comrades—a language so free from the old catchwords—because they did not grasp the political meaning of this language, this case served as an important political lesson. (I called it "lessons in French" at the time.) And I must say that these comrades in the leadership of the Young Communist International learnt quickly and supported the line of mass policy pursued by the Communist youth of France. And not only that, they took the initiative in inducing the Young Communist Leagues in other countries to adopt the same course.

Of course, the Young Communist International as a whole has taken only the first steps in the application of these tactics. But there can be no doubt that under the guidance of their present leaders they will advance rapidly and determinedly along this road.

The American Experience

The experiences recently gained by the *Young Communist League of the U.S.A.* are also highly instructive.

There matters began with the calling of a national congress of youth organizations, convened on the organizational initiative of a fascist group, with the support of the government. The Young Communist League was faced with the question of whether or not to send its representatives to this congress. It is not surprising that opinion within the Young Communist League should have been divided on so novel a question.

A few years earlier a question of this kind would in all probability have been settled even without discussion: any participation would have been rejected, and our Young Communist League would probably have received such a sectarian decision with self-complacency, as the best solution to a difficult question. But now this question was discussed in the Young Communist League, and it turned out that the comrades who were opposed to participating in the congress had very poor arguments to offer. "We are afraid that we are too weak to put up a stand against such powerful forces," they said.

You see, comrades, how the old sectarianism, which has so often

taken the shape of exaggerated self-assertion, on this occasion, when a great practical task demanded a clear and bold decision, revealed itself as a *lack* of confidence in our own forces, in the leading role of the working-class youth.

The leaders of the Young Communist League of the United States, headed by Comrade Green, brushed this faint-hearted argument aside, rolled up their sleeves, and went to the congress, at which a motley gathering of young people from the most varied classes was assembled. Our American comrades scored a great success at this youth congress. The agents of fascism were completely isolated, and the congress was converted into a great united front congress of the radical youth. And when somewhat later a second national youth congress was held, our young comrades already enjoyed a position of authority in it. This authoritative position was due to the trust they had gained by their new mass policy, and also to the fact that they had learnt to approach and conduct the work in the right way.

What did they learn concretely?

First, they learnt *soberly to estimate the degree of radicalization of the youth masses*, that is, to estimate it correctly, without Right under-valuations and without "Left" over-valuations.

Previously many comrades had too simple an idea of the matter. They believed that once a radicalization of the working people and an upsurge of the mass movement had begun—which was actually the case in America—it could be „stamped” without further ado a real “revolutionary” upsurge, and one had only to look up the program of the Young Communist International for the revolutionary slogans that should be issued in such a situation and the revolutionary tasks that should be undertaken.

Our American young comrades now learnt that although a great process of radicalization and activization of the youth masses had indeed set in in the United States, these masses—indeed even their most active representatives—still did not understand the most ordinary Communist slogans, appeals and demands. They did not even understand so “simple” a thing as fascism. This had first to be explained to them in a popular way. And even when they grasped that fascism is an enemy, it was found that many of them considered it quite in order when the Hearst press issued the cry, “Against Communism and Fascism!” They failed to observe that specific American fascist agitation was being carried on precisely under this treacherous guise. They had to be convinced, in the most patient manner possible, of the true state of affairs, without our own opinion being *forced on*

them. Whereupon it was discovered, for instance, that many of those who were already prepared to join with the Young Communist League in the fight against the war danger and fascism could still not be got to take part in street demonstrations. They were entirely unaccustomed to this method of struggle, and one had at first to join with them in other, more elementary forms of struggle, which could be regarded by the members of their organizations as their *own* forms of struggle, in order later, as their fighting spirit grew, to lead them further.

Secondly, our American young comrades convinced themselves that they indeed *had a lot to learn from the non-Communist masses*.

For instance, they learnt a "new language," the fresh, concrete, popular and expressive language of youth—the language which Comrade Dimitrov here demanded—in place of the old, dry, stereotyped jargon which is almost incomprehensible to the normal human mind. Comrade Green has explained how, in connection with the youth congress, they succeeded in framing the highly important "Declaration of Rights of the American Youth," which was formulated in a real youth language.

Comrade Green told us how the American comrades did everything in their power to see to it that the largest possible number of representatives of youth organizations were drawn in to help formulate and finalize this document. And he added that by working in this manner our young comrades in the U.S.A. did not weaken the prestige of the Y.C.L., but strengthened it. By their work they showed large numbers of youth that the Y.C.L. had no narrow interests but that its main concern was to broaden the Youth Congress and make it a wide mass movement against reaction and for the immediate needs of the youth.

In particular, the representatives of the American Young Communist League have learnt from the masses how to approach the *non-proletarian* strata of the youth correctly. Formerly many members of the Young Communist League looked down, for instance, on the student youth, and thereby, of course, made it difficult to set up closer contacts with them. This was also an expression of sectarianism, and had to be eliminated from the ranks of the Communist youth movement. If the representatives of the Young Communist League of the United States had not known how to approach the student youth in a comradely fashion it would have been impossible for them to have developed their great united front actions among the students, the most important of which was the big student strike against war and fascism on April 12, 1935, in which 184,000 students took part.

Thirdly, the American young comrades have also learnt to overcome their former rigidity in tactics and to apply *flexible tactics*.

Comrade Green has quoted two characteristic examples of this. The first example is that the religious members of the Congress, who were at first particularly sceptical of the possibility of a united front with the Communists, on Sunday morning were given the opportunity of the enjoyment of divine service in private. The second example is that on the initiative of our comrades the Roosevelt project for making provision for the youth by an appropriation of \$50,000,000 for the purpose of immediate assistance to the youth was not labelled demagogic, but rather credited as a *concession* which the government was obliged to make in view of the growing united front movement. At the same time, the leadership of the youth united front exposed the utter inadequacy of this measure and also pointed out how the government's plan threatened to impair the condition of certain sections of the youth. Comrade Green was quite right when he pointed out that as a result of these tactics Roosevelt's project, instead of being a weapon against the Youth Congress, became an instrument for mobilizing the youth for increased government aid.

Here you see the same result as in France: you see how the sword was wrested from the hand of the enemy and turned against him.

Fourthly, the comrades of the Young Communist League of the United States have learnt that it is essential to enter the *major youth organizations* led by the *bourgeoisie*. And not only that, they have also learnt how to work in these organizations.

Formerly, such bourgeois youth organizations were simply counted by the Young Communists among the enemy organizations, and their millions of members were without more ado regarded as "enemies."

The fact was ignored that in the United States—and not only there—the *great majority of the working youth* belong to such organizations. You must not think that the majority of the youth are unorganized. No, in many countries the majority are organized, and not only in the army, not only in the schools—they too are bourgeois organizations—but directly in these bourgeois youth organizations. But even after we really began to speak of the need to work within the ranks of these organizations, this work was understood in an entirely sectarian way as so-called "destructive work." Now, "destructive work" in this sphere was so out of place that it is not to be regretted that, as was mostly the case, it simply remained on paper.

The American young comrades are speaking from experience when

they say today that we must work in these mass organizations not with the purpose of destroying them, but in order "to transform them from centres of bourgeois influence into centres of united front struggle, into centres of proletarian influence." The mass of the youth regard these organizations as their own, and only by earnestly working to champion the needs and interests of the youth through these organizations can we extend our influence among the masses.

In these organizations our American young comrades have discovered a large number of functionaries and active members who are prepared to fight side by side with the Communists against reaction, and in the course of not quite a year the Young Communist League in the United States has succeeded in creating 175 fractions in these mass organizations. (*Applause.*)

Comrades, these are only a few—not all—of the positive experiences gained by the Young Communist League of the United States in the course of the work recently carried on by our American young comrades.

Work in Bourgeois Youth Organizations

Is the work which the Young Communist League of the U.S.A. has initiated so successfully within the ranks of the bourgeois mass organizations possible and necessary only in the United States?

Of course not. It is equally possible in many other countries, though perhaps not in the same forms. In Great Britain our comrades have begun something similar, although in different forms. Or, to be more exact, they are only just beginning; they are considerably belated. In the Scandinavian countries our comrades are so late in making a start that up till now they have not even seriously set themselves this task.

Naturally, in the fascist countries this work has to be carried on differently from the way it is carried on under legal conditions. Comrade Dimitrov has so excellently shown you this in his brilliant comparison with the Trojan horse.

These tactics, however, must be applied not only in the fascist countries, but also in many colonial countries, for instance, in China. You know that our Chinese young comrades in the Soviet regions have performed truly legendary deeds of heroism. In the regions where fighting is going on they have learnt also to apply the tactics characterized by the comparison with the Trojan horse in a masterly fashion. But in the White regions, where the terror is raging, it is precisely in

these tactics that they are weak. The heroism of our young Chinese comrades is testified to by the prominent French writer André Malraux, who went to China and there recorded in his descriptions the most outstanding examples of the deeds of our Chinese young comrades. In view of such heroism one might have thought that the Chinese comrades would not have found it difficult to rid themselves of the relics of sectarianism in all the White regions suffering from the terror. But it appears that this task is a difficult one even for our Chinese comrades. They must therefore learn the tactics characterized by the comparison with the Trojan horse and by means of these tactics endeavour to penetrate into the larger mass organizations. And they can do it. They are talented people. (*Applause.*)

In other colonies, too, particularly in India, a great deal, in my opinion, can be achieved by working in the bourgeois mass youth organizations.

Particularly in the imperialist countries this is a tremendously important task from the standpoint of the fight against war. How can we speak at all of preparing the working people to fight war if we do not work in these big bourgeois mass youth organizations? The major part of the working youth belong to these mass organizations, yet in most countries we are taking no serious measures to establish contacts with the youth in order to explain to them the impending danger.

Is this a Bolshevik way of preparing for the event of war?

Even the non-fascist leaders of these mass organizations, even those who in "times of peace" carry on pacifist propaganda, the moment the ruling bourgeoisie of the country starts a war, in nine cases out of ten will, in one form or another, place themselves at the disposal and, in fact, in the employ of the war-makers. The membership of these organizations will be taken unawares, they will be dragged into the war by deceit, if they are not prepared for all this beforehand by their connections with the Communists, and if the Communists do nothing in advance except prate about "mass work."

The Young Communist Leagues

But how can the proletariat be prepared for the event of an imperialist war as long as our Young Communist Leagues are as weak as they are today? Without strong, active and revolutionary organizations of the working-class youth, organically connected with the major youth organizations of the given country, the proletariat, both in the fight against war and in the fight against fascism, will be like a one-armed soldier.

From the fact that strong revolutionary organizations are necessary, it by no means follows that our Young Communist Leagues must accept only such new members as are already revolutionary, already Communist, already fully capable of action. No. *The doors of our youth organizations must be thrown wide open!* Wherever these organizations are legal, membership in them must be open to all young men and women who sincerely sympathize with communism and wish to study communism.

The whole life of the Communist youth organizations must be so re-fashioned that new members who are not yet Communist and who are not yet accustomed to communist discipline and activity will feel at home in the Young Communist League, come to us willingly, and take a keen interest in the life of our organizations, which should offer them the opportunity of developing, step by step, into Communists.

Fluctuation has been particularly great in our youth organizations. What is this fluctuation? *It is a criticism of our sectarianism by the masses of sympathizers! (Applause.)* As a rule, this sectarianism is expressed in the fact that excessive demands are immediately made of new members in the matter of organization and discipline, demands they cannot fulfil. Furthermore, their work is badly organized, it is mostly of a technical nature, and so tedious that it can kill the most lively interest. If, however, a new member is unable to fulfil the demands made of him, he is very often ruthlessly criticized by our youth functionaries, or perhaps even expelled. I have information from Spain to the effect that there the demands in respect of work are even greater in the youth organizations than in the Communist Party. And fluctuation there is correspondingly high. This is one form—if not the only form, at least one of the worst ones—of youth organizations copying the Party, a thing which has been so rightly criticized here by Comrade Dimitrov.

In earlier years one could often hear hair-splitting arguments among our young comrades on the following scholastic alternative: should our youth organizations be *educational* organizations or *fighting* organizations? A fight was even waged against the "opportunist deviation" that was allegedly expressed in regarding the youth organizations as educational organizations. Naturally, if education is taken as meaning only schooling by means of books, theses, lectures, etc., this in undoubted an opportunist opinion. But how did Lenin put the question? At the Third Congress of the Russian Young Communist League, held in October 1920, he said the following:

"The task of the Young Communist League is to organize its practical activities in such a way that, in learning, organizing, uniting and fighting, it shall train its members and all those who look upon it as their leader, train them to become Communists."

The Central Task of the Young Communist International

The central task of the Young Communist International now is to establish unity of the youth movement against fascism, war and capitalist oppression. This central task has been clearly and definitely set forth by Comrade Georgi Dimitrov in his report and in the resolution on the second point of the agenda, and was greeted with the greatest enthusiasm by the delegation of the Communist youth to our world Congress. The line of the Young Communist International for the next period of the struggle has been thereby laid down.

The coming congress of the Young Communist International must, on the basis of past experience, concretize and explain this great central task of the Communist youth for each country, and embody it in individual, immediate practical tasks. There is no need for me to anticipate this work of the Y.C.I. Congress. I only wish to stress the decisive and immediate importance of this question for all capitalist countries, both for the youth movement and for the fight of the working people against fascism, war, and the capitalist offensive.

As a rule, the *Socialist youth* organizations are hedged off and isolated no less than the Young Communist Leagues. Today most of them are half-dormant educational organizations, without any serious value as factors in the proletarian class struggle. But close contact with the Communist youth can arouse them to new life and fresh activity.

An amalgamation of forces and permanent unity of action between the Young Socialist Leagues and the Young Communist Leagues would undoubtedly result in a vigorous influx of working-class youth into both of these organizations. Together they would constitute the leading force in the mass youth movement in the various countries, especially in the movement against fascism, which threatens to destroy both the Communist and the Socialist youth and all progressive youth organizations.

That is why Comrade Dimitrov called upon the youth to form an *Anti-Fascist Association* of the Young Communist and Young Socialist Leagues on the platform of the class struggle. Comrade Dimitrov's

appeal is sure to evoke a very strong response among the Socialist youth.

It is the duty of the Young Communist Leagues, on their part, to do all they can to help the Socialist youth organizations to accept this proposal. This will help the youth movement to make a great stride forward.

But this international task in no way implies that in certain countries one cannot and should not go further. If the Communist International now places on the order of the day even the question of uniting the Parties, it is obvious that the possibility of uniting the Socialist and Communist youth organizations in a number of countries is all the greater.

The Young Communist League of France has come out as the pioneer in this question, too. It has boldly and openly taken the initiative and has approached the Young Socialist League with a platform of unity which met with warm response among the Socialist youth. In Spain as well this question has already become an immediate issue. Within the very near future it may become an immediate issue in many other countries, such as Austria, Belgium and the U.S.A.

In the *Young Socialist International* a Left wing has already formed which is fighting for a united front and is coming closer to the revolutionary standpoint. It cannot be otherwise: on the eve of great mass struggles, the best forces, the most militant forces of the working-class youth leave the camp of reformism and go over to the camp of proletarian revolution. And this is true not only of the forces of the working-class youth, but also of the youth of other sections of the working population, the student youth, etc. They supply fresh, militant reinforcements for the active army engaged in the fight for social emancipation.

We already see this in the countries where the Communists have been able to foster properly the radicalization of the youth in the ranks of the bourgeois mass organizations.

Hence the far-reaching and immediate significance of the second task of the youth as outlined by Comrade Dimitrov, the task of "uniting the forces of all non-fascist mass youth organizations, even to the formation of various kinds of common organizations for the struggle against fascism, against the unprecedented manner in which the youth is being stripped of every right, against the militarization of the youth, and for the economic and cultural rights of the young generation."

Comrades, this is the true path, this is the line of the Communist youth movement.

For Freedom? For the Ideals of Youth?

In the international movement for a united youth front new slogans have, as you know, recently come into use—new slogans which basically are rather old slogans: the slogan of freedom, the slogan of peace, and the slogan of the fight for democracy. It is only natural that doubts should have arisen on this question in the minds of many of our comrades. For they know very well—and it cannot be otherwise—that the slogans we support must stand the test of Bolshevik criticism.

But the comrades who have these doubts fail to realize that times have changed, that slogans are not petrified things, but that their living content changes in accordance with time and circumstance. The slogan of freedom was at one time, during the bourgeois revolution, a revolutionary slogan; it then became a reformist slogan, and finally, still later, a counter-revolutionary slogan. In Germany, for instance, in 1928-32, when the Social-Democrats were in the government and issued the slogan "Against Right or Left Dictatorship, For Freedom," this was a counter-revolutionary slogan of the Social-Democratic government. But today the slogan of freedom, if it is advanced as a slogan in the fight not *against* the Communists, but in a united front *together with the Communists* against fascism, naturally acquires an entirely different content. These slogans of the People's Front are, of course, vague, and it is our duty to make them clear. *Freedom for which classes*—this question must be made clear to the masses. Otherwise these slogans may result in clouding the class consciousness of the proletariat and its allies.

Hence, the question must be made clear; but it would be unwise simply to reject such slogans. These old slogans must rather be given a new revolutionary content. Lenin said: "*Freedom, it need hardly be said, is a very, very important slogan for every revolution, be it socialist or democratic.*"

In accordance with the new "usage of French" in the youth united front movement they have also begun to speak of the *ideals* of youth. But perhaps this is idealism, and should be rejected? No, the fact of the matter is that there are reactionary ideals and revolutionary ideals. The former must be rejected and the latter prized. The *Soviet ideals* are materialist, Communist ideals. And these ideals we must, of course, make widely known to, and inculcate in, the widest masses of the youth.

Facts show what tremendous prestige the Soviet Union enjoys, particularly among the youth of the capitalist countries. But how weak we

are in popularizing the achievements of the Soviet Union! How weak we are when it is a question of showing the glorious future that faces Soviet youth. This is one of the most important political tasks of the youth movement.

I have before me a speech made by a Soviet girl who finished secondary school this spring. I wish to quote a part of her speech which depicts the position of Soviet youth in the following words:

"The doors to a joyful and creative life stand widely and hospitably open before us.

"Engineers, turners, tractor-drivers, agronomists, writers, chemists, electrical engineers—all are needed by my young and glorious fatherland.

"Yes, Vladimir Mayakovsky was right: 'Life is good, and it is good to live' in such a splendid era and in our splendid country. Boys and girls of our age abroad have never known such glorious, sunny, joyful times as we are experiencing today.

"... This opportunity for joyful, cheerful and thorough study was won for us by our parents, by our brothers, in the October fighting, under the leadership of our great Communist Party.

"... Among us there are not only future engineers, technicians, chemists, agronomists, Red Army commanders, airmen and tank operators; among us there are also writers, poets, composers and sculptors, among us there are volley-ball players, chess players and fine athletes!

"... We are the young masters of our Soviet land! A tremendous task confronts us, the task of conquering time and space.

"We want to live long, we must live long, and we shall live long, because Lenin has set us the task of building Communist society. He said that it is the youth that is destined to build the Communist society.

"... Yes, we shall learn to know, to master, to open up the vast areas of the Arctic and the blue firmament. When our country commands us to be heroes, every one of us will become a hero.

"... Heroism in our country is no senseless chase after fame: our heroism is in the serious day-to-day struggle and work."
(*Stormy applause.*)

Comrades, if things like this were translated into foreign languages, using the fresh language of youth, they would perhaps be of greater political benefit to our revolutionary agitation than the publication of lifeless statistical tables.

* * *

Comrades, you will see from the positive examples I have mentioned here, taken from our youth movement, that in certain countries the Communist youth has already taken the first decisive steps to learn "to swim in the stormy sea of the class struggle," as Comrade Georgi Dimitrov expressed it.

We at this Congress are all inspired by the firm conviction that the new tactical orientation that Comrade Dimitrov has outlined with such power of conviction will help us to achieve really great successes in every sphere of our world movement, and not least in our youth movement.

But, comrades, one thing is certain, namely, that *this will not take place automatically*. Above all, it is absolutely essential that the Communist Parties should give the youth movement constant and solicitous aid, much more effective aid and leadership than hitherto. I address this demand not to all the Communist Parties, but to most of them. Why? The young comrades of France and the United States tell us that they have nothing to complain of, that the Parties in those countries really help them. Comrade Raymond Guyot said: "Formerly we helped the Party, now the Party helps us." The successes gained by our youth through its own efforts have also given the Party leadership a better understanding of the role and needs of the Young Communist League.

But *all Communist Parties*, all leaders of the Communist Parties must understand once and for all that the youth movement is the heart of the movement for social emancipation. Our youth, our hope, is growing. But it would grow ten times faster if the Party leadership earnestly helped the Young Communist Leagues and if they assigned really capable forces to assist the youth. Some leaders of our youth movement have during the past few years grown to the stature of real youth leaders. But it will not do for every functionary of a Young Communist League who has proved himself to be a capable worker in the youth movement to be immediately taken away from this work by the leadership of the Party, as is now often the case.

Of course, the Young Communist League is, among other things, a school of cadres for the Party. But a school that is robbed of every capable teacher and leader is of no value. (*Stormy applause.*)

Comrades, *the second imperialist world war is approaching*. Preparations are being made for the most criminal of all criminal wars—a counter-revolutionary imperialist attack on the Soviet Union, the fatherland of the workers of all countries.

Well, we know that this war—as Comrade Stalin has said—will be a most dangerous war for the bourgeoisie. But whom the gods would destroy, they first make blind.

The ruling bourgeoisie is steering towards a most dangerous military adventure. In many countries it has already selected stone-blind and insane adventurers as “leaders,” and has turned over the government to their hands.

Perhaps the German bourgeoisie does not deserve better leaders, but the world must be protected against the frenzy of such leaders.

The Japanese military leaders, those “apostles of peace”—as General Araki called himself and his accomplices—are no less dangerous to the common weal. In Poland, too, it is not political wisdom that guides the course of government; and British imperialism, insatiable in its lust for conquest, is prepared to support, directly or indirectly, any adventurist government in a war against the Soviet Union. From various ends and corners they are all driving the world into a new massacre of the peoples. Hence the menace of war.

But this does not frighten us. It demands, however, an earnest and energetic mobilization of the working population for the purpose of resisting, for combating the war preparations of the bourgeoisie; it demands that the millions of young people be won over for the united front.

For how else can we be in a position to resist the imperialist warmongers?

We want to attack our class enemies in the rear when they start war against the Soviet Union. But how can we do so if the majority of the working youth follow not us, but, for instance, the Catholic priests or the liberal chameleons.

We often repeat the slogan of transforming the imperialist war into a civil war against the bourgeoisie. In itself, the slogan is a good one; but it becomes an empty and harmful phrase if we do not do everything today to create a united youth front. (*Loud applause.*)

We need a revolutionary youth movement at least ten times as wide as our Parties, and a united youth front hundreds of times wider still. That this is entirely possible in many countries is shown by the achievements of our French and American young comrades.

Only if we undertake and press this work everywhere with the greatest possible energy, only if we achieve really important successes in this work, shall we be able to say that we are preparing the masses in a Bolshevik way for the event of an imperialist war breaking out.

We also invite the pacifist youth organizations to join the united

front. Nevertheless, we must continually remind the youth of what Lenin taught us:

"You will be given a gun. Take it and learn the art of war thoroughly. This knowledge is necessary for the proletarians, not in order to shoot your brothers, the workers of other countries, as is being done in the present war and as the traitors to socialism advise you to do, but in order to fight against the bourgeoisie of your own country, to put an end to exploitation, poverty and war, not by means of good intentions, but by a victory over the bourgeoisie and by disarming *them*."¹ (*Loud applause.*)

If our Parties and our youth carry on the fight against war in this spirit, there can be no doubt that in a number of countries the counter-revolutionary imperialist war will lead to revolution, and that by the end of this war many a Goering will present as pitiful a picture as van der Lubbe did in Leipzig. (*Loud applause.*)

Long live the Bolshevik youth!

Long live our glorious Soviet fatherland!

Long live the great leader of the world proletariat—Stalin!

(*Stormy and prolonged applause. All rise amidst cries of "Rot Front!" "Hurrah!" and "Banzai!" The "Junge Garde," "Carmagnole" and other revolutionary songs are sung.*)

WANG MING (presiding): Comrade Ercoli has the floor to speak in reply to the discussion.

(*The delegates stand and greet the appearance of Comrade Ercoli on the platform; they give him an ovation and sing the "Internationale."*)

ERCOLI: Comrades, the very character of the debate on the danger of a new imperialist war and on the Communist International's fight against this danger makes it possible for me to limit my reply to the discussion to a minimum.

All the representatives of the revolutionary movement of the capitalist world and of the colonial countries who have spoken in the discussion have in point of fact declared their full agreement with the line of my report and with my analysis of how the danger of a new imperialist war is maturing and how the bourgeoisie, and especially the most reactionary parties of the bourgeoisie—the German National-Socialists, the Japanese militarists, the Italian fascists and the extreme

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Russian edition, Vol. XIX.

war parties of the bourgeoisie throughout the world—are preparing a new imperialist war.

The speeches of all the comrades evidence that they are in full agreement with the fundamental point of my report; I have in mind that close connection which exists at the present time between our fight for peace and against imperialist war and our fight against fascism.

At the present moment the danger of war threatens concretely from three sides: from Nazi Germany, imperialist Japan and fascist Italy. These are the most reactionary of all the states that have either abolished the bourgeois-democratic form of government or have never possessed it. These states are striving for war, desire war, are already waging war.

Capitalist reaction is war; fascism is war. That is what actual life demonstrates to us now.

By concentrating the forces of the Communist vanguard of the working class against fascism, we create the necessary conditions for the success of our fight against war and for peace.

Comrade Dimitrov in his historic report to our Congress, pointed out for the Communist International and the world proletariat the line of effective struggle against fascism as also the basic line of our fight against war and for peace.

One of the defects of the discussion was that the speeches of all those who took part in the debate bore, perhaps, too much of a general character; the speakers did not bring out what concretely must be the nature of our struggle against war at the present time.

Today we are already confronted with war. Japan is waging war against China; nevertheless, the majority of the Communist Parties still neglect the task of waging a struggle in defence of the Chinese Revolution.

A special question of a tactical character which a number of comrades brought up incidentally in the discussion is the attitude to be adopted by us towards the gas mask exercises which are being conducted now in all capitalist countries. The workers and in general the entire civil population are being compelled to participate in them.

We must decide this question in conformity with our general line of struggle against war. I said, and I repeat, that we must not adopt the standpoint of boycotting gas mask exercises in general. That would most certainly be a deviation on the side of narrow, sectarian and even anarchistic anti-militarism, which could only bar our way to establishing connections with the wide masses.

Gas masks are just as much a weapon as any other. The gas mask is a weapon of a defensive character; it can be employed in times of civil strife, inasmuch as gases are one of a variety of weapons employed by the bourgeoisie in the struggle against the working class for dispersing demonstrations, and during strikes. And we must know how to defend ourselves from this barbarous weapon of the bourgeoisie.

It would also be incorrect to justify our attitude of boycott solely on the grounds that gas masks are allegedly useless. Such an assertion only facilitates the spreading of the false view that the development of military-technical means has now reached such a level as to make defence, and therefore war too, impossible. There are pacifists who adhere to this mistaken point of view, but we must firmly stand by our own.

Workers who are threatened by gas attacks in any war, including civil war, would be justified in asking us: why should we not prepare ourselves for this war too?

We must put the gas mask exercises conducted by the bourgeoisie to good advantage by advancing a number of immediate demands which would link us with the masses and develop the struggle of the masses for peace and against war.

A more important and more general question of the prospects of a war of national defence in Europe, and of the position of the proletariat in such a case, was raised in the speech of Comrade de Leow. The prospect of a war of national liberation concerns not only the Dutch Party but also a number of other Parties, and we must welcome as a sign of political maturity the fact that the representatives of all the Parties concerned adopted a correct Marxian position on this question.

The possibility of national wars in Europe even in the period of imperialism was advanced by Lenin as early as 1916, in his polemic with Rosa Luxemburg on the question of her pamphlet published under the pseudonym of Junius. Rosa Luxemburg denied the possibility of national wars because the world was divided up between several imperialist "great" powers; from which it follows, she maintained, that every war, even if at the beginning it has a national character, becomes an imperialist war, inasmuch as it inevitably affects the interests of some one of the imperialist powers or imperialist coalitions. Answering Rosa Luxemburg, Lenin pointed out that from the purely theoretical point of view it was impossible to deny the hypothesis of the transformation even of the World War of 1914 into a national

war. Then, reviewing the problem of the concrete possibility of national wars in Europe, Lenin pointed out that such wars would be possible especially in the case of the victory of the revolution in Russia and of the extreme exhaustion of the forces of the big powers in the war of 1914, from which it follows that national wars against the imperialist powers are not only possible and probable but are inevitable and will have a progressive, revolutionary character.

The situation today has much in common with that which Lenin foresaw as early as 1916.

The victory of the revolution in Russia is a fact; the extreme weakening of the big imperialist powers as a result of the war is also a fact; but in addition to that we have fascism, German National-Socialism, which threatens with its bayonets the freedom and national independence of a number of small peoples in Europe. Hence, we must not only confirm the prospect outlined by Lenin in 1916, but also emphasize the tasks which confront our Parties inasmuch as this prospect becomes real.

The theses of the Sixth World Congress declare that participation in and support of a national-liberation war signifies that the proletariat, in supporting such a war, undertakes "temporary cooperation with the bourgeoisie." But this temporary cooperation must never lead to renouncing the class struggle, *i.e.*, it cannot and must not ever be a reformist cooperation. It is absolutely necessary to stress this because the bourgeoisie, as we know, even if it is compelled at a given moment to take up arms in defence of national independence and freedom, is always ready to go over to the camp of the adversary in face of the danger of the war becoming transformed into a people's war and of a mighty upsurge of the masses of workers and peasants demanding the satisfaction of their class demands.

Hence, by defending the national freedom of small countries threatened by imperialist aggression we shall defend everything that is progressive in the national sentiment of the small peoples struggling for their independence, but most emphatically refuse to champion the reactionary policy of the bourgeoisie. No other policy of defending the national independence of the small peoples is possible.

There are small countries in Europe, such as Holland and Belgium, whose national independence is clearly menaced by a predatory war and intervention on the part of Nazi Germany. At the same time, the bourgeoisie of these countries oppresses an extensive colonial empire. There is not the slightest doubt that in these countries our policy of defence of national freedom must never be detached from the real

struggle for the liberation of the oppressed and exploited peoples of the colonies. "A people that wishes to be free cannot subjugate other peoples." Guided by these words of Marx, we proved by our wholehearted struggle for the widest application of the principle of self-determination of the peoples in all countries that the working class is the sole progressive force on which a policy of active counteraction to the fascist tyranny threatening all nations can be based.

The questions raised by the British and Dutch comrades, however important and big they may be, are for all that special questions, concrete questions of our tactics.

What we must emphasize is the central feature of our struggle against war at the present time. This is directly connected with the perspective which we, in fighting for peace, put forward not only before ourselves but before the working class and the working people of the whole world.

We have analysed what is new in the international situation. We have singled out the most important features. We must emphasize most emphatically that the review of the sum total of these factors leads us to the conclusion that our fight for peace is not only necessary but has better chances of success at the present time than ever before.

In affirming this we do not by any means change our Marxist viewpoint on the question of war. We know and affirm that war is a requirement of the capitalist system, that capitalism cannot develop without enveloping the peoples in the horrors of war.

There have been in the past certain pseudo-"Marxists" who attempted to slur over or to revise this position, asserting that capitalism can "organize" and develop peacefully. All these opportunist theories of the possibility of a peaceful, "organized" development of capitalism have long ago suffered shipwreck. On the other hand, we know that there have been and still exist tendencies to adopt a fatalist attitude on the question of combating war. The latter is the result of a pedantic distortion of the exact meaning of the Marxian assertion of the impossibility of separating war from the capitalist regime.

This fatalist point of view leads to the fight for peace being considered impossible, devoid of all prospects, a hopeless fight which has no chance of success as long as the capitalist regime exists.

The consequence of this false position was the narrow sectarian character, confined within the limits of propaganda alone, which stamped the anti-war struggle of our Parties over a long period.

They limited themselves to propaganda against war solely within the ranks of the vanguard of the working class, on the assumption

that they were the only force that could be convinced of the inevitability of war under the capitalist regime. This led to the loss of contact with the masses, which, entering the struggle, wish to have before them the prospect of a successful outcome of this struggle. Under these conditions, our fight against war could not meet with proper success. Taking into account the sum total of the new features which characterize the present situation, we must now correct these mistakes.

What are these new features?

1. The existence of the Soviet Union—of a country in which the working class, being in possession of power, uses this power in defence of peace and for the preservation of peace, in the interests of building socialism in the Soviet Union and in the interests of the working masses of the whole world, in the interests of civilization and human progress.

This is a bulwark of tremendous significance in our struggle for peace and gives this struggle a prospect of success such as it has never had before.

2. The fundamental forces of the working class have begun to stir; on an ever-widening front they are coming out against the capitalist regime, fighting for their urgent demands, fighting against fascism. They are striving for the unification of their forces in this fight. This impulse of the masses towards unity in the fight against fascism, an impulse which is at the same time striving towards unity in the fight against war, is now compelling even the leaders of the Second International to revise their position.

In a few days the Executive Committee of the Second International will meet in Brussels and discuss the very same problems that confront us here: the question of what position must be adopted by the working class in the fight against war.

We can only express the hope that at this session of the Executive Committee people will be found who will be able to express the ever-growing will of the masses of Social-Democratic workers to struggle for peace, and who will be able to give practical expression to this desire for struggle, not only by formulating new resolutions on this question, but also by drawing all the necessary conclusions, so that the warmongers be opposed by a mighty united front of struggle not only of the workers but also of the wide masses of working people.

3. Hatred of imperialist war is growing not only among the masses of workers, but also among the masses of the petty bourgeoisie, among the intellectuals. Never has hatred of war been so deep and strong as now.

Hence, the possibility exists of drawing into the fight for peace those sections which up to now have not yet participated in the political struggle and which constitute a considerable force capable of opposing the instigator of war—fascism.

4. Finally, we have shown that at the present time there is a breach in the imperialist front, that besides the capitalist states that are the chief instigators of war, there are also bourgeois states interested in the preservation of peace, and small countries that desire to defend peace because they have every ground for fearing an attack on their independence on the part of Nazi Germany.

As a result of all these factors, a new situation is beginning to take shape before the working class. The front of struggle against war and for peace can now be organized not only as a front of the vanguard of the working class struggling for the overthrow of the capitalist regime. We can now enlist new forces for this front. This front includes, on the one hand, the whole mass of working people of the state in which power is in the hands of the proletariat. This state gives the masses a magnificent example of how to fight for peace and to preserve it. Moreover, it has an army that stands for the defence of peace. On the other hand, we must enlist for this front the working class of all countries where power is still in the hands of the capitalists.

We can enlist for the front of struggle for peace the masses of Social-Democratic workmen and the wide masses of pacifists, Catholics, women, youth, national minorities that find themselves menaced, and their organizations. We can enlist for this front even those bourgeois governments which at the present moment are interested in the preservation of peace.

Under such circumstances, we must in concluding the discussion on this point of the agenda of our Congress boldly put forward the following prospect: that it is not only possible to postpone war but that it is even possible to prevent the outbreak of a new imperialist war. But for this prospect to become real, our whole fight against war must assume a character differing profoundly from that which it had before.

We must shatter the narrow bounds of our former anti-war and anti-militarist work; our fight for peace must assume the widest possible character, embracing as far as possible the whole of the people.

Take the peace ballot held in England, which mobilized eleven million people. Here is an example which our comrades should fol-

low, here is initiative which the British comrades should have taken in hand in order to place themselves at the head of the masses willing to defend peace.

It is true, comrades, that we have to deal with a monstrous enemy, with fascism, which is in power in a number of countries and utilizes this power in order to propagate war, to prepare war and wage war. But we know, Comrade Dimitrov proved it, and the actual facts of life all bear this out, that the power of fascism is unstable, it is being undermined by profound contradictions inherent in it, and is by no means guaranteed against the class struggle flaring up.

If the German working class, led by its Communist Party, by uniting its forces and placing itself at the head of all the anti-fascist forces of the country, could deliver a mortal blow to the National-Socialist regime, just think, comrades, what tremendous consequences this fact would have for the entire international situation.

From the point of view of the prospects of war, this would radically change the situation for the working class of the whole world. It would open up a new path and new possibilities for our fight for peace.

Hence, a very great responsibility before the working people of the whole world rests on those Parties that are struggling in the countries of fascist dictatorship, and in the first place on our German, Italian and Japanese comrades. Every success in their struggle opens up new prospects for our fight for peace.

No less responsibility falls on the Communist Parties of all the other countries. Their duty is to implant the following conviction deeply among the masses: the fight for peace has enormous chances of success if only all enemies of war, all friends of peace, the forces of the working class, the forces of the wide masses of the petty bourgeoisie, the intellectuals, the national minorities that are being menaced, and the states themselves that are interested at the present moment in the preservation of peace, join together and oppose the instigators and inciters of war in one mighty front.

In giving our fight for peace a new impetus and holding out before it such a prospect of success and victory, we do not in the slightest degree betray our Marxist standpoint on the questions of war and peace.

We know that in the struggle between the parties of war and the forces of peace the very fate of the capitalist system is at stake.

To avoid war, to preserve peace for as long as possible—means at the same time to act in the interests of the cause of socialism.

Under conditions of peace, the forces of socialism, which are the forces of progress, are consolidated and advance onwards.

Let us convey to the whole world our profound conviction that the preservation of peace is possible, that it is possible to hinder war, and that under definite conditions to avoid war is a thing that is possible and can be achieved. Imbued with this conviction, let us rally around us millions of people to wage a struggle for a really great cause, a cause that is truly just and socialist—the cause of peace.

Led by our Comrade Stalin, the Bolshevik Party, the most consistent revolutionary party that has ever existed, gives us an example of consistent struggle for peace conducted under the most difficult conditions and nevertheless crowned with success.

May the fight of the whole Communist International for peace develop with the same consistency, with the same courage, with the same determination and with the same enthusiasm—then it also will be crowned with the same success!

Our banner is the banner of struggle for peace. Let us unfurl this banner before the millions of working people all over the world! Let us defend it from the fascists, and from all the warmongers! Therein lies the guarantee that tomorrow millions of working people will fight with us for revolution and for socialism!

(Prolonged applause, growing into an ovation; the delegates stand and sing "Bandiera Rossa.")

FORTY-SECOND SITTING

(August 17, 1935)

THE RESULTS OF SOCIALIST CONSTRUCTION IN THE U.S.S.R.
STATEMENT BY COMRADE MARTY

Opening: 6:30 p.m.

Presiding: Kang Sin

KANG SIN: Comrade Manuilsky has the floor for the report on point four of the agenda.

(Comrade Manuilsky is greeted by stormy applause, rising to an avation.)

Report by Comrade Manuilsky

THE RESULTS OF SOCIALIST CONSTRUCTION IN THE U.S.S.R.

I. THE VICTORY OF SOCIALISM IN THE U.S.S.R.

MANUILSKY: In the period between the Sixth and Seventh Congresses of the Communist International an event of outstanding importance took place in the lives of the nations—the final and irrevocable victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R. (*Applause.*) After the great October Socialist Revolution, this is the second great victory of the international working class over world capitalism, and it ushers in a new era in the history of mankind.

Strengthening the stronghold of the world proletarian revolution economically and politically, the victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R. opens a new phase in the development of our country; it marks a new great change in the relation of forces in the world arena to the advantage

of socialism and to the disadvantage of capitalism, and it marks the beginning of a new stage in the development of the world proletarian revolution. This victory, won by the workers and collective farmers of our country under the leadership of the C.P.S.U.(B.), of its Leninist Central Committee, and of our great Stalin, with the active solidarity of the proletariat of the whole world, signifies the victory of the Communist International which was born as a result of the October Revolution, the victory of its program, policy and tactics.

The significance of this victory of the Communist International is all the greater and more edifying for the international working class for the reason that in this period the world working-class movement in a number of capitalist countries (Germany, Austria and others) where the Social-Democratic Parties and the reformist trade unions played the leading role in the movement, suffered defeats which were the defeats of the reformist policy and of the capitulatory tactics of the Social-Democratic Parties, defeats of the Second International. The world historical significance of the victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R., which has been achieved in the period when an economic crisis unprecedented for its acuteness and duration prevails in the capitalist countries, lies in the fact that it throws a vivid light on the two paths of development of the international proletarian movement—the path of the Communist International and the path of the Second International. The path of the Communist International has led by way of the proletarian revolution to the victory of socialism in one-sixth of the territory of the globe and to the further strengthening of the positions of the international proletarian revolution to an enormous degree, while the path of the Second International, the path of reformism, is leading to defeats of the workers and the victory of fascism. The comparison of these two results is bound to create, and is creating, a revolution in the minds of the proletariat of all capitalist countries, and is causing a profound change and regrouping in its ranks.

But the significance of the victory of socialism in our country is not confined to the changes in the world working-class movement. It is far wider and more profound. As a result of its socialist successes our country is beginning to set the peoples in motion. The comparison of our past with our present is beginning to convince vast masses of people of the correctness of our path, of the correctness of Bolshevism and the path of the Communist International.

What was our country before the revolution?

We were a country with the most exploited, most disfranchised and downtrodden working class in Europe, with the most poverty stricken,

wretched and dispossessed peasantry, afflicted with the disasters of famine. We were a country whose agriculture was the most backward and extensive, a country of chronic droughts and harvest failures, a country of the wooden plough, the mattock and the Volga boatman. Ours was a country stricken by typhus and cholera epidemics, degeneration, alcoholism and frightful mortality, an uncultured, illiterate and superstitious country, a prey to the opium of religion and the obscurantism of the priests. In order to maintain their rule—rotten to the core—the ruling classes of our country artificially fostered national enmity, invented legends of ritual murder, organized pogroms against the Jews and massacres of Armenians and Tatars. Tsarism, like a blood-stained octopus, fastened its tentacles on the nations; it tormented whole nations and with ruthless brutality crushed the manifestations of national life among the Ukrainians, Byelorussians, Georgians, Armenians, Tyurks, Uzbeks, Kazakhs, and others. A revolutionary movement was seething and growing in the country and acquired extraordinary strength when the proletariat, led by the Bolshevik Party, assumed the lead of the tormented people. But the ignorant and incompetent rulers were persecuting the revolutionary people and were driving the country into an abyss. They declared that the country's backwardness and lack of culture were peculiarities of the Russian "national spirit", and they boastfully threatened, in the wars woged by tsarism, to "plant the cross on St. Sophia" and to knock the enemy "into a cocked hat." And the workers and peasants of our formerly unhappy country paid dearly for this ignorant boastfulness. Old Russia was beaten by everybody who wanted to do so.

"She was beaten by the Mongol khans. She was beaten by the Turkish beys. She was beaten by the Swedish feudal barons. She was beaten by the Polish and Lithuanian 'pans.' She was beaten by the Anglo-French capitalists. She was beaten by the Japanese barons. All beat her for her backwardness, for military backwardness, for cultural backwardness, for governmental backwardness, for industrial backwardness, for agricultural backwardness."¹

Russia was beaten in the imperialist war of 1914-18. She emerged from this war bleeding, maimed and bankrupt. But the imperialist powers forced a new war on the revolutionary people, who had overthrown not only tsarism, but also capitalism. The landlords and capitalists, driven out by the revolution, were tearing our country asunder, selling it wholesale and retail. Our country was partitioned from her border regions—on the West, the South, the North and the East. And from the, this

¹ J. Stalin "The Tasks of Business Managers," *Leninism*.

catastrophe to which the landlords, industrialists and bankers had brought our country, she was saved by the proletarian revolution. (*Applause.*) The revolution extricated her from the war, saved her from political disintegration and economic destruction; it saved her from plunder by pirates who were stronger than tsarism; it emancipated her from economic enslavement by foreign capital; it protected her from the world crisis, which has flung peoples and states into the abyss, and from the fascist reaction that is raging in the capitalist world. At a speed unprecedented in the history of humanity, it is developing her productive forces and replacing the mattock, the wooden plough and the scythe with tractors and harvester combines. It is transforming "the prisoners of starvation, the wretched of the earth" into the masters of their country and the creators of a new and magnificent life. It is steadily raising the standard of living of the masses; it is implanting a new and advanced socialist culture; it is establishing fraternal relations between the peoples that inhabit it. It has erected a powerful workers' state; it has created a new social and economic system, in which the new socialist individual is being formed; and it has brought to life the dream of the best minds of mankind—socialism.

And it is not only our Party that today appears before the Seventh Congress of the Communist International with these achievements; it is our young socialist country, which, by the will of the Party of Lenin and Stalin, has been put to serve the interests of the world proletarian revolution (*loud applause*), that is reporting to the working people of the whole world how it has fulfilled its international duty to them. (*Loud applause.*) It is reporting today to the billion and a half people who are oppressed and enslaved by imperialism how, led to its doom by capitalism, it was resurrected by socialism. By its example it shows the path of salvation to the exploited classes, to the colonies downtrodden by imperialism, to the oppressed nations, to the small states which are enslaved economically and politically, to the nations defeated in imperialist wars and to the millions who are being crushed in the vice of the crisis. Its experience serves as a call to them to put an end to the system which has become a misfortune for the world and the curse of humanity.

And yet, only eighteen years separate us from the frightful past of our country! What do these years mean when compared with the centuries that were required to change economic systems and political forms in the history of the development of mankind! But even of these eighteen years, ten years were required merely for the restoration of the pre-war level of production.

In 1927-28 we had only just completed the restoration of our national economy, which had been destroyed by the imperialist war and Civil War, and exceeded the pre-war level of production. At that time our socialist industry possessed a few large enterprises, but it consisted in the main of small factories and mills, with old, worn-out machinery and suffering from an acute shortage of technical forces. There were still five social-economic formations in the country, from the most advanced—the socialist formation—to the patriarchal formation. In 1928 the socialist sector represented 44 per cent of the whole of the national economy, and although it was steadily increasing, the further progress of our socialist development was hampered by the backwardness of agriculture. The predominant feature of the countryside was scattered, peasant farming, producing little for the market, and giving rise to and reviving capitalist elements which were striving to undermine the alliance between the working class and the peasantry. The kulaks were raising their heads and were striving to thwart socialist construction by sabotaging grain deliveries. We were obliged to wage an intense struggle for grain. The grain problem became a burning political problem. The supply of foodstuffs to the industrial workers was being menaced and, consequently, socialist construction itself was being menaced. The capitalist elements in the country were a social support for the hostile imperialist encirclement.

Lenin's question, "Who will win?" faced the Party and the whole country in all its immensity.

We had to choose between two paths of development, either *retreat*, which would lead to the restoration of capitalism, or an *offensive*, which led, and was bound to lead, to the victory of socialism.

Having trained, reared and educated our Party in the course of decades, Lenin and Stalin had prepared it for this decisive choice. Not long before this, the Party, headed by Comrade Stalin, in a fierce struggle against Trotsky and the bloc of Trotskyites and Zinovievites, had upheld the Leninist-Stalinist thesis of the possibility of the victory of socialism in one country. (*Applause.*) In effect, the Party was obliged to suppress a revolt of the petty bourgeoisie, which did not desire and feared the development of the socialist revolution. In 1928 the Right opportunists, who were the mouthpiece of the kulak element, launched an attack against the Party. They opposed the rapid tempo of industrialization and insisted that we import from abroad consumers' goods instead of machinery and machine tools for the new factories; they fought against the expansion of state farm and collective farm construction and proposed that the Party should base itself entirely on individual peasant

farming; they were opposed to the offensive against the capitalist elements and asserted that the kulaks would peacefully grow into socialism; and they tried to frighten the Party and the working class by declaring that without the kulaks there would be no grain.

It was the genius of Stalin, the genius of the working class, that led the country.

And the Party made its choice, a choice which determined the destiny of the development of our country and the future of the world proletarian revolution.

The Party chose the path of a broad offensive *along the whole front* against the capitalist elements. This was the path of socialist reconstruction of national economy, the path of the industrialization of the country and the collectivization of agriculture, the path of the elimination of the kulaks as a class, the path of eradicating the roots of capitalism in the country.

The task was not an easy one.

The alternative that then confronted us was, as Comrade Stalin said recently in casting a retrospective glance at the past we had traversed:

"... *Either* we solve this problem in the shortest possible time and consolidate socialism in our country, *or* we do not solve it, in which case our country—technically weak and culturally unenlightened—would lose its independence and become a stake in the game of the imperialist powers."¹

The solution of this problem was attended by the tremendous difficulties of the reconstruction period, the difficulties of overcoming the technical and economic backwardness of the country, the difficulties of reconstructing the social and economic relations in the rural districts, the difficulties of suppressing the sabotage and the wrecking activities of hostile elements, the difficulties resulting from capitalist encirclement, difficulties behind which the class enemy invariably lurked. And the stronger the pressure of the socialist offensive, the more bitter became the resistance of the class enemy. The whole capitalist world waited with bated breath for the outcome of the struggle, the émigré groups began to stir and the Industrial Party crept on to the stage. The military General Staffs began to prepare for intervention, which they fixed for 1930. But nothing could break the determination of the Bolsheviks.

The general line of the Party for a broad offensive along the whole front was concretely expressed in the Five-Year Plan by means of which

¹ J. Stalin. *Address to Graduates from the Red Army Academies*, May 4, 1935.

the first country of proletarian dictatorship laid the basis for the solution of a great strategical problem—to overtake and surpass, both in the technical and economic sphere, the advanced capitalist countries. (*Applause.*) And here began that heroic phase of great socialist construction which furiously enraged our enemies, evoked the admiration of our friends and the astonishment of the whole world.

The U.S.S.R. is astounding the whole world by the speed of its socialist construction. The rate of increase in industrial output during the period of the First Five-Year Plan amounted on an average to 22 per cent per annum. In 1934 it amounted to 18.3 per cent and in 1935 (according to plan) it should amount to 17 per cent. Never in history has any capitalist country known such a pece of development. In a period of four years we increased the output of pig iron from five million tons to ten million tons per annum, whereas the U.S.A. required fifteen years to traverse the same distance and Great Britain required thirty-six years. The proportion of the output of our machine-building industry to world output in 1928 was 4.2 per cent; in 1937 it will be 37.5 per cent. (*Applause.*) In 1928 we held fifth place in the world and fourth place in Europe in industrial output; we now occupy second place in the world after the U.S.A. (*applause*), and first place in Europe. Please note, comrades, that I am referring, not to present-day Europe, not to Europe during the period of crisis, but to the Europe of 1929. (*Applause.*) In the output of oil, pig iron, machinery and tractors we have taken first place among the European countries. (*Applause.*) We are beginning to develop our own machine-tool industry, the production of high-grade steels, motors, turbines and generators; we are developing our own chemical industry and our own aviation industry; and we are mastering the production of the most complex machinery of various kinds. Our country is being covered with the scaffolding of construction projects; mountains are being removed, tunnels cut, railway embankments erected, canals dug, dams constructed and factories built which are marvels of modern technique; new industrial regions, new coal and metal centres are being created and the national republics are being industrialized. And all this is being done at a time when in the capitalist countries industrial and commercial life is dying down, the smoke stacks of existing factories are ceasing to belch forth smoke, blast furnaces are being blown out one after another, the traffic in ports is coming to a standstill, a deathly silence is falling on many working-class quarters and millions of people are being condemned to forced idleness. In the U.S.S.R., however, a tremendous wave of popular enthusiasm, sweeping all obstacles from its path, is transforming the country. (*Applause.*)

Comrades, you see this transformed country. You know that the U.S.S.R. has increased its industrial output almost five-fold compared with 1913 and three-fold compared with 1928, and that the socialist sector now embraces 96 per cent of the whole economic life of our country. But what lies behind this tempo, behind the Dnieprostroys, the Magnitogorsks, the Turk-Sibs and the White Sea Canals; what lies behind the construction and the growth of those 40,000 enterprises of large-scale industry and those 300,000 enterprises of small-scale industry, which our socialist country possesses today? The tremendous labour of our people, whom this great construction work has re-educated in a socialist way, remoulded in a class way and resurrected materially and culturally; labour, in the course of which our Party, our workers' organizations, and the proletarian social life of the country, have converted raw, rustic material into enthusiastic shock brigade workers, heroes of labour, into concrete-layers who have set new world records, and blast furnace operators who have exceeded the highest coefficient of effective utilization of furnaces.

Our construction work did not proceed smoothly, as may have appeared from a distance. We needed metal for our construction work, but there was no metal; we needed building material, but there was an acute shortage of building material; this material and vast masses of people had to be transported to new places, but the transport system was congested; we had to feed, shoe and clothe the builders and workers, and provide them with at least elementary housing conditions, but resources and supplies were inadequate; we needed skilled workers, but where were they to come from all at once? There were no engineers, no technicians, nor the most elementary industrial culture. The age-old Russian slovenliness inherited from the old regime, the routine and bureaucracy of centuries were weighing heavily upon us. And the class enemies took advantage of every slip made by our young and inexperienced cadres; they drew up inflated estimates, muddled plans, submitted obviously unsuitable drafts, spoiled machines, organized fires and explosions and put expensive equipment out of commission.

During these years the muscles and nerves of the country were stretched like taut wire. We lived only for our construction projects. When we thought, we thought in the figures of these construction projects; when we spoke, we spoke only of them; at our meetings we argued and disputed only about them. When we slept we dreamed only of them. Everything—the material resources of the country strained to the utmost, mobilized human will, organized human energy, Bolshevik tenacity and purpose—were all subordinated to one aim: the

fulfilment of the plan of great work the Party and the country had set themselves. It was this aim that dictated the modest standard of living for our people. The millions of members of our Bolshevik Party fed badly and slept badly in those days. Our best people—Dzerzhinsky, Kuibyshev—wore themselves out in sleepless nights on the work of economic calculations.

Not all were able to hold out in this socialist offensive, which eclipsed the campaigns of all times and of all peoples. All who were timid, egoistical, vile and rotten fell away; they complained, whimpered, spread distrust, prophesied ruin and joined forces with world capital in its rabid hatred of the victory of socialism. The abominable, disgusting and vile political degenerates of the bloc of Trotskyites and Zinovievites murdered our friend, the favourite of our Party, the organizer of the victories in Baku, Leningrad and Khibiny, Sergei Mironovich Kirov. (*The delegates rise in honour of the memory of S. M. Kirov.*)

But the mighty avalanche started by the iron and unyielding will of Stalin swept on in its course. It captured the last strongholds of capitalism in our country by reconstructing agriculture on the basis of collectivization. In place of 25,000,000 individual peasant farms it created 250,000 collective farms, 5,000 state farms, and over 4,000 machine and tractor stations, entailing an expense to the state of over 9,000,000,000 rubles. In place of the wooden plough and the winter-starved nag, there are now operating 300,000 tractors, about 50,000 harvester combines and 35,000 motor trucks. In respect of the use of tractors our agriculture occupies first place in the world. There is now twice as much land per collective farm household as there was per poor peasant or middle peasant household when they bore an individual character. (*Applause.*) In 1934 our collective farmers supplied 1,000,000,000 poods more grain for the market than prior to collectivization when they constituted individual poor and middle peasant farms. The old situation when the rate of growth of our agriculture lagged behind that of industry is being eliminated. In the period from 1926 to 1929 the increase of agricultural production amounted on an average to 2.7 per cent per annum; in the first two years of the Second Five-Year Plan it was 6.5 per cent, and in 1935 it should exceed 16 per cent. (*Applause.*) These successes are visible to millions of people, and you, comrades, perceive them all the more since you come from countries where the condition of the peasantry is desperate, where the indebtedness of the peasantry in Germany, for instance, amounts to 14,000,000,000 marks, where the indebtedness of the farmers in the

United States, for instance, is equivalent to 42 per cent of the total value of their farms, where during recent years, nearly half a million American farms have been auctioned, where the debt of the Japanese peasant is more than five times as large as the gross annual yield of agriculture, which means that the Japanese peasant and his family must refrain from eating, drinking, and clothing themselves for a period of five years in order to emerge from this servitude.

Our victory over the capitalist elements did not come easily. We were obliged to break a century-old system in the countryside, overcome prejudices and eradicate "the frightful habits of millions." The class war in the countryside became extremely acute. Days and nights were spent in passionate discussion of the question whether to form a collective farm or not. The poor peasant argued at village meetings until he was hoarse on behalf of the advantages of collective farming. The middle peasant wavered: in the evening he would decide to join the collective farm, but next day he would take back his horse and his implements. The kulaks tried to spread unrest among the people, incited them to kill off their cattle and horses, to plunder public property and to burn grain. They dug up their sawn-off rifles which they had kept concealed since the time of the war. Our country passed through all these difficulties, led from victory to victory by the Party of Lenin. And the results of this offensive against the capitalist elements are evident today. (*Applause.*)

In 1928 we were only just starting to fulfil the First Five-Year Plan. Not only did we succeed in fulfilling that plan in four years, but we are now successfully fulfilling the Second Five-Year Plan. In 1928 the world bourgeoisie and its Social-Democratic agents calculated on putting an end to socialism and restoring capitalism by the hand of the peasants. As a matter of fact, the horny hands of the peasants, guided by the working class, put an end to capitalism in the countryside and thus ensured the victory of socialism. In 1928 we were obliged to introduce bread ration cards. Today the bread cards are abolished, today the bread problem in our country is solved. In 1928 the kulak had raised his head and wanted to smash socialism; today socialism has smashed the kulak. In 1928 the bourgeoisie put their stake on the capitalist degeneration of the U.S.S.R., on an alliance between world capital and the capitalist elements within our country. Today our country is not threatened with capitalist degeneration; but capitalist deterioration is corroding the world in which the bourgeoisie still holds sway. Today victorious socialism is forming an ever closer union with the world labour movement. Today it

is not the twilight of socialism and the dawn of capitalism that have begun, as the whiteguard, Trotsky, asserted, but the dawn of socialism and the twilight of capitalism, as our Party asserted. (*Applause.*) In 1928 Lenin's question "Who will win?" had not been settled within our country. Today it is settled finally and irrevocably in favour of socialism. In 1928 we were confronted by the difficulties of the reconstruction period. Today we have surmounted these difficulties; there remain the difficulties connected with overcoming the survivals of capitalism in economy and in the minds of men, and with the settlement of the question "Who will win?" in the international arena. (*Applause.*)

In the course of a severe class struggle, the working people of the U.S.S.R., led by the Party of Lenin, which is headed by Comrade Stalin, have transformed the U.S.S.R. from a weak, backward, uncultured, agrarian country with five social-economic formations, from a country technically and economically dependent on the capitalist countries and militarily vulnerable, into a highly industrialized country which is capable of producing all modern complex machinery and is independent of the whims of foreign capital; into a country with an advanced collective agriculture and where the socialist system has undivided sway; into a country whose power of defence is ensured to the utmost. (*Applause.*)

Thereby we have created the indestructible foundation of socialism. And now, as a result of the *new technical basis* we have laid for our national economy and the new social forms, the *socialist forms*, we have created for it, we are opening for our country the broadest prospects for its continued socialist development. Its advance along socialist rails will no longer be hindered either by a low technical and economic level of productive forces or by the system of private, small-scale, peasant farming. The planned socialist economy of our country will no longer, as formerly, be hindered by the spontaneous elements of the survivals of capitalist economy. Today man and his labour have been liberated from these conditions, which in the past set a limit to our development. Today it is man, his indomitable will and his organized labour which decide everything. "The feasibility of our program lies in living people"—said Comrade Stalin. And what has been done, for instance, in the sphere of railway transport by Comrade Kaganovich, who by his Bolshevik persistence refuted the limit set by the old science, is an excellent illustration of the forces latent in the socialist system and of what can be achieved by the Bolsheviks who are guiding socialist construction. (*Applause.*)

II. THE NEW PHASE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE LAND OF SOCIALISM

The victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R. created the conditions for such a growth of the material well-being of the masses and for such a rise in their cultural level as no capitalist country in the world ever dreamed of. Only now can we place *the care for the human being in the centre of our thoughts and efforts in all its greatness*. Man is not the manure of history, as fascism proclaims; the masses of humanity are not the object of the stick of the fascist drill sergeant who imagines that he is the Nietzschean superman; man is not a slave building the Egyptian pyramids, he is not an adjunct of the capitalist machine for the purpose of providing a life of ease for a handful of parasites; he is not an object of slavish, feudal, capitalist exploitation. Man is the creator of socialism, the creator of a new social system. For the first time in history man has been put in his proper place. (*Applause.*) He is the smith forging his own destiny and his own history, he is the master of the socialist machine. *Socialism exists for him; he himself is the great goal of socialism.*

"There would have been no use overthrowing capitalism in October 1917 and building socialism in the course of a number of years," said Comrade Stalin at the Seventeenth Congress of the C.P.S.U.(B.), "if we are not going to secure a life of plenty for our people. Socialism means, not poverty and privation, but the abolition of poverty and privation, the organization of a well-to-do and cultured life for all members of society."

To create for the men, women and children of the land of Soviets a well-to-do, cultured, healthy, joyous and happy life—this is what the whole of our Party and our country are now persistently working to achieve. In a socialist country the creation of a well-to-do, cultured and happy life is not the work of a single person. In our country happiness is not based on the shifting sands of chance or luck, it is not the lot of the most crafty, the most insolent and shameless persons elbowing everyone out of their way. We are solving the problem of the happiness of the socialist man by our collective effort. In our country tens of millions of men and women have joined their personal destiny with the successes of socialism. And only such an enormous collective effort is capable of solving this problem.

Today we already have many achievements to record in the work of radically improving the material and cultural level of the

labouring masses. I am not referring to the reforms which the proletariat compels the capitalists to concede by fierce struggles only to have them taken away again during the first industrial depression, as was the case during the world economic crisis. I refer to the changes that serve as a starting point for the further improvement of the conditions of the masses; changes which are possible only as a result of the victory of socialism.

Our country knows not unemployment, and will not know it. (*Applause.*) Since 1928 the number of industrial workers and employees in our country has increased more than twofold, the payroll has increased more than fivefold, whereas in capitalist countries wages have dropped 40 to 50 per cent. Our expenditure on social insurance rose from 1,050,000,000 rubles in 1928 to over 6,000,000,000 rubles in 1935 (*applause*), whereas in capitalist countries social insurance is being abolished, and the bourgeoisie is robbing the workers more and more by deductions from their wages. In the Soviet Union the working day has been reduced to seven hours, and to six hours for miners, whereas in capitalist countries the length of the working day is increasing while the workers are being speeded-up ever more.

Our countryside is not becoming impoverished. Our peasants are not experiencing an agrarian crisis. They do not gaze sorrowfully at the boundary marks of their fields which set the limits to their strivings for a prosperous human existence; they suffer neither from a lack of land nor from a shortage of draft animals, implements and seeds. During last spring and this summer alone, the Soviet farms and collective farms received 21,000 harvester combines and nearly 100,000 tractors. Our peasants are not being strangled by the usurers and banks, for the Soviet state has invested billions of rubles for the purpose of raising agriculture. Our peasants are making rapid strides towards a prosperous life. Already in 1933 the gross yield of grain crops per capita of the collective farm population was 10 per cent higher than that of the kulak farms in 1929. (*Applause.*) In 1933 the average output of grain was 10.2 centners per collective farmer and member of his family compared with 6.2 centners in the poor and middle peasant farm, and 9.2 centners in the kulak farms, in 1929. Our peasant holds his fate in his own hands, it is inseparably connected with the collective farm, which rests on a firm mechanized basis.

Our municipal construction is making rapid progress, so also are our city improvement schemes. Working-class slums, so characteristic of capitalism, are disappearing; large, roomy and well-lit houses are

being built, old cities are being reconstructed and new cities seem to spring up out of the ground. The ten-year plan for the reconstruction of Moscow recently adopted by our Party and our government outlines a city of fabulous beauty that will fully deserve to be called the capital of the world.

The cultural level of the working people is rising perceptibly. In the U.S.S.R. over 25,000,000 children attend elementary and middle schools which employ 600,000 teachers. During the past six years the number of children attending middle school has increased tenfold. At the present time 1,300,000 students attend our universities and technical colleges. The Second Five-Year Plan provides for an increase in the number of specialists from 2,700,000 to 4,000,000, and the number of agricultural experts is to be doubled. During the period of the Second Five-Year Plan 5,000,000 skilled workers are to be trained. In 1934 alone, 270,000 ordinary peasant boys and girls learned to drive tractors and 19,000 learned to operate harvester combines. Up to 1933, 1,500,000 persons, workers and workers' children, had already been appointed to positions as factory managers, judges, public prosecutors, teachers, scientific workers, students in academies, etc.

Take our output of books, newspapers and magazines. The works of Lenin and Stalin, and of our great proletarian writer Maxim Gorky, are sold in tens of millions of copies. Comrade Dimitrov's report at our Congress has been published here in an edition of one million, and even this edition is not enough. (*Loud applause.*) Scientific works are published in editions of 50,000. The total circulation of our newspapers rose from 8,800,000 in 1928 to 38,500,000 in 1934. And yet books and newspapers are the things we suffer the greatest shortage of because the cultural requirements of our people are growing and expanding at a much more rapid pace.

Soviet power has regenerated whole nationalities which were dying out under the yoke of capital; it has helped them to create their own written language, to stand on their own feet and to join the happy family of nations of the U.S.S.R. as equal members.

In his speech at the Twelfth Congress of our Party in 1923 Comrade Stalin said:

"The fact of the matter is that the whole East regards our Union of Republics as an experimental field. Either we shall, within the Union, find a correct solution for the national problem in practical application and establish truly fraternal relations and

true collaboration between the peoples—in which case the entire East will see that our federation is the banner of its liberation, an advance guard, in whose footsteps it must follow—and that will be the beginning of the collapse of world imperialism; or we, the federation as a whole, commit an error, undermine the confidence of the formerly oppressed peoples in the proletariat of Russia, and deprive the Union of Republics of that power of attraction which it possesses in the eyes of the East—in which case imperialism will win and we shall lose.”¹ (*Applause.*)

Today the whole world sees the rich crop on our “experimental field” to which Comrade Stalin referred. In the national republics and regions of the Soviet Union we observe an unprecedented rise of national economy and culture, national in form and socialist in content. In the Ukraine some of the greatest giants of our industry have been built, such as the tractor works and turbine works in Kharkov, the engineering works at Kramatorsk, the locomotive works at Lugansk, the industrial combine in Zaporozhye, etc. The total circulation of newspapers published in the Ukrainian language exceeds 6,000,000.

The Central Asiatic Republics have developed their own industry and now have a proletariat numbering 300,000. Before the revolution 800 ploughs were employed in agriculture in Turkestan; now half a million ploughs and 15,000 tractors cultivate the fields in Central Asia. (*Applause.*) Seventy per cent of the *dekhan* farms in Central Asia are collectivized. Before the revolution only an insignificant number of children attended elementary school in Turkestan, and these were mostly Russian children. In 1934, 1,000,000 children attended the 11,000 elementary schools in Central Asia where tuition is conducted in the native language. (*Loud and prolonged applause.*) There also, they have thirty-five higher educational establishments. Before the revolution only 0.7 per cent of the population of Turkmenia were literate; today 70 per cent of the population can read and write. (*Applause.*)

In the remote, scorching steppes of Central Asia a great historical event occurred which is causing profound excitement throughout the Orient, where more than half of the population of the world lives. In the Central Asiatic Republics of the Soviet Union, where only recently the feudal-landlord slave system prevailed, the socialist system is being created today.

¹ J. Stalin, *Marxism and the National and Colonial Question.*

We have roused to active political and industrial life the women, that enormous stratum of the population. The peasant woman who formerly wept over her hopeless poverty, who wailed the song of her bitter fate, the fate of woman, who gave birth to her children amidst the corn in the scorching fields, is being transformed in the collective farm into an active and brave participant in socialist construction.

The new collective farm rules guarantee woman the right to maternity leave with pay at the rate of her average earnings in the collective farm. Women are being elected to the management boards of collective farms, they are elected to the village soviets, to the District Executive Committees and to the regional and all-Union governing bodies. During the last elections 330,000 women were elected as members of village soviets, 2,500 were elected chairmen of village soviets and 50,000 were elected to urban soviets. And how many women have been awarded the Order of Lenin and the Order of the Red Banner of Labour! The government is doing everything possible to give women wider opportunities to enter the arena of social and industrial life. For this purpose they are helped in looking after their children: about eight million children in our country attend kindergartens and nurseries.

Our children in general are surrounded with tender love, attention and care, such as the children in no capitalist country obtain. We have abolished vagabondage among children, a thing inherited from our bitter past. No children are left to the care of fate, because the state and society look after orphan children.

Can one enumerate all our achievements? Huge volumes could not contain the full description of all that is being done in our land of victorious socialism. But great as these achievements are, they do not satisfy us. We do not measure our strivings by the standards of the pre-revolutionary Russian worker, or by the standards of the workers in capitalist countries. Neither of them can serve as a model for us, any more than the life of a convict can serve as a standard for one who has forced his way to liberty. We want all our workers and collective farmers to live still better, we want every single one of them to be prosperous; we want them to have more meat and more fats, we want our village folk to be well-clothed and shod, we do not want to see the straw thatched huts to remind us of the old life of Russia; we want to win universal cleanliness, comfort and convenience for all, so that no man or woman shall ever be tired of living and of feeling the joy of life. (*Applause.*) It is along this

path that we are steadily marching onward, overcoming all obstacles and difficulties. In even less than a few years time you will not recognize present-day Russia any more than you can recognize NEP Russia of the past in present-day socialist Russia.

As a result of the construction of socialism in our country the state of the proletarian dictatorship has been strengthened to an enormous degree. Today, no less than on the morrow of the October Revolution, we are the state of the dictatorship of the proletariat; but by means of the final and irrevocable victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R. we are raising the power of our Soviet state to an unprecedented level. Our state is no longer what it was in the period of civil war when, in the midst of sanguinary battles, we were compelled to fight for the creation and consolidation of Soviet power. Our state today is the state of the most stable and firmest system, the socialist system, resting, not on the economics of War Communism, but on the basis of the flourishing economics of victorious socialism. (*Applause.*) It is not the state of the period when the historical question "Who will win?" was being settled in the class struggle between socialism and the capitalist elements, but a state in which socialism has already achieved victory over the capitalist elements. It is not a state with a variety of social-economic formations, but a state in which the socialist system holds undivided sway, and in which the unity of interests of the workers and collective farmers is growing more and more.

As far back as 1918 Lenin said: "The Soviets are the highest form of democracy; more than that, they are the beginning of the *socialist* form of democracy." The historical decision of the Seventh Congress of Soviets—adopted on Comrade Stalin's initiative—to introduce in our country equal suffrage and direct and secret ballot is a very important step in the direction of achieving that socialist democracy to which Lenin referred.

Why did we take this step?

First, because the proletarian dictatorship has become stronger, and moreover, the further expansion of proletarian democracy will in its turn still further strengthen the proletarian dictatorship.

Secondly, because in our country the private ownership of the means of production has been superseded by the socialist ownership of the means of production; but the further extension of proletarian democracy will in its turn strengthen in the minds of the masses the consciousness that public property is inviolable and indestructible, and

it will help to overcome the survivals of capitalism in economics and in the minds of men.

Thirdly, because social changes have taken place in the U.S.S.R. which help the Land of Soviets to pass to classless socialist society. The extension of proletarian democracy in its turn will accelerate the construction of classless socialist society.

Huge masses of people in our country have now turned finally and irrevocably to the side of socialism.

Not hundreds of thousands of advanced proletarians but over one hundred million socialist working people are taking part in the creative work of building and developing a new life.

Following the peasants who have become collective farmers, yesterday's conservatively-minded elements among the academicians, scientists, specialists, actors and artists have come over to socialism. Out of the ranks of the people arise leaders, organizers, engineers, technicians, inventors and an infinite number of brave heroes of labour and science, thousands of eager enthusiasts who are mastering the ice-bound Arctic, daring stratonauts who challenge the cosmic heights, heroic airmen, explorers of the depths of the ocean, the bowels of the earth, and mountain peaks.

The new generation, born on Soviet soil and moulded under Soviet conditions, is being drawn into the work of building up socialist life. This generation did not know of capitalists and their agents, and of gendarmes; it knew no slavery, exploitation and oppression, it only knows, and recognizes the interests, tasks and aims of socialism. Like the older generations which passed through the school of revolution, this generation loves its country with passionate, filial love, loves it, not because it is enormous, not because its shores are washed by five seas and two oceans, not because it possesses inaccessible mountain ranges, broad fields, dense forests and wide rivers, not because in the history of this country and of the people inhabiting it there occurred the battle of Kalka, the personalities of Dimitri Donskoy and of Ivan Kalita, the uniter of old Russ, but because the human strivings of this country are enormous, because our rivers, seas and oceans are Soviet, because our forests, valleys and mountains are Soviet, because in the past history of this country there was not only Ivan Kalita but also Stepan Razin, there were popular uprisings, the strike at the Morozov mills, the barricades of Presnya in Moscow, the age-long struggle against tsarism; they love it because Lenin and Stalin transformed this country from the gendarme of Europe into the great sentinel guarding the liberties of the people, the country

which began the world proletarian revolution (*loud applause*); they love it because in the revolutionary war against the interventionists it displayed miracles of heroism.

They love their country because in the midst of capitalist barbarism it is the vehicle of Soviet humanitarianism, because this Soviet humanitarianism exceeds all that the bourgeoisie could perform in their most flourishing period. They love their country because it is a socialist country, they love their multi-national people because it is the most revolutionary people in the world, because this country and its people are the bulwark of the emancipation of the whole of toiling humanity. (*Applause.*)

The more quickly the rise and development of socialist construction proceeds, the larger the masses that are drawn into the work of construction, the more acutely necessary does it become to apply new, more flexible and varied forms of ensuring that large masses actually take part in the administration of the state, in improving the work of the organs of state, in eradicating from them the bureaucratic legacy of the past and in exercising universal control and accounting. Consequently, the need arises for the further extension of proletarian democracy.

But the further extension of proletarian democracy becomes, in its turn, an instrument for drawing new sections of the population into the work of socialist construction, an instrument for the socialist re-education of the people, for remoulding the human mind and for eradicating from it all survivals of capitalism. Proletarian, democracy develops the initiative and independent activity of the masses, stimulates in them a desire to watch and control the elected bodies, raises their sense of responsibility for the work of socialist construction, teaches them to manage large socialist enterprises and to administer a huge state; it trains them to adopt a socialist attitude towards work. The development of proletarian democracy increases the significance of the public opinion of the working people, this mighty instrument by means of which socialist social environment influences the backward, passive, individualistically-minded members of society. Under the influence of the socialist environment in which everything breathes of enthusiasm and the fervour of labour, there develops a new world outlook of the Soviet individual, a new attitude towards society, towards socialist property. This atmosphere of labour even infects former criminals. The White Sea-Baltic Canal is not merely a canal navigated by Soviet ships; it is a canal through which thousands of men and women have passed from civic death to

civic resurrection. (*Applause.*) But with the increase in the number of socialist builders, with the further expansion of the social basis of the state of the proletarian dictatorship, the defence power of this state grows before the very eyes of its bitter enemies that surround it.

The Red Army, as the organ of defence of the proletarian state, reflected in its development the great road our Soviet country and our Soviet people have traversed. The time when our young and almost unarmed Soviet government was compelled to beat off the piratical invasion of fourteen capitalist states more with its enthusiasm and at the price of enormous sacrifice and suffering than with military technique, has gone forever. Today, the enthusiasm of the revolutionary people is multiplied by the most advanced and powerful technique. Our Red Army is in the forefront in mastering, absorbing and reflecting, like a peculiar magic alloy, all our technical-economic and social changes and our achievements in all branches of life and economy. And as the Land of Soviets proceeds along the road towards classless society, the Red Army also becomes more and more a socially homogeneous fighting organization of all the nationalities inhabiting our socialist Republics.

Not everyone as yet appreciates to what extent the victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R. has affected the fighting capacity of the Red Army. As a result of the victory of socialist relationships, every toiler regards himself as complete master of the country in which the land, the gigantic factories, the Soviet farms and the instruments and means of production belong to the whole of society of which he is a member. The Red Army man who comes from the ranks of the collective farmers is not the peasant of the capitalist countries, downtrodden, groaning and hungry, often never seeing beyond his own hut and his own plot of land no bigger than a grave, he is not the muzhik who, having heard that a gigantic comet will collide with the earth and destroy the whole world, calmly says: "Let it fall into the next village!" (*Laughter.*) He is not the peasant crushed by ages of slavery and ignorance with a world outlook as wretched and restricted as his own farm, which impels him to say: "I don't care what happens to anybody else as long as my hut and my dung heap remain intact." No, the Red Army man is the armed representative and warrior of a great, multi-national family that possesses one huge land, a huge enterprise stretching from one end of the country to the other, from frontier to frontier and not from hedge to hedge. (*Applause.*) The Red Army man is a citizen of the Soviet Union who sees his greatest interests, his plans for a better, richer and more joyous life through the prism of

the great interests and the wide horizon of his own great land, of the great enterprise of the whole Union. (*Applause.*)

The Red Army, which comes from the people, serves the people and defends their interests, is surrounded with the care and love of the masses of the people and is inspired with the great aims of serving toiling humanity; and with dignity, honour and pride it guards our socialist fatherland, the fortress of the world proletarian revolution. (*Applause.*) Connected by inseparable bonds of fraternal solidarity with all the oppressed, with all the exploited, with all the peoples of the earth, it is the genuine vanguard of the growing movement of the people against imperialist wars.

Could all the processes which have taken place as a result of the victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R. fail to affect our Party, which was the organizer of this victory? Our Party not only led the masses to these victories, it itself grew up, became hardened and politically consolidated and extended its ties with the masses in the process of socialist construction. The people of our country have developed into great organizers of socialist construction, statesmen of outstanding merit, talented leaders of the masses. They have still further developed that specific Bolshevik style of work which is the combination of American efficiency and the Russian revolutionary range of action. In knowledge of the work that is entrusted to them our lower functionaries could teach a thing or two to the bourgeois minister of any country. (*Applause.*)

The concrete guidance of the Leninist Central Committee of the C.P.S.U.(B.) has ensured the growth of our forces, the proper selection of all that is talented in the ranks of the working class. Severe self-criticism has prevented stagnation and complacency and has facilitated the further improvement of our Party, Soviet and economic leaders. No other government in the world has permitted or permits such free criticism of the defects in the state, party and economic apparatus as has been and is permitted in our country.

At the same time, under the leadership of Comrade Stalin, our Party has been trained during these years to display stern Bolshevik irreconcilability towards all sorts of deviations, towards attempts to bring into the Party the influence of alien and hostile classes and to divert it from the path of fighting for socialism to the path of capitalist degeneration. In the past, attempts were made to shake the unity of our Party by the Trotskyites, Zinovievites and the Right deviationists. Today all the oppositions are utterly routed. The Zinoviev-Trotskyite bloc has degenerated into a wretched band of fascist terrorists, the counter-

revolutionary nature of which is now clear to millions of working people. The Right-kulak deviation has now been exposed to the masses in its true colours.

Today, not only the working people of our country but the working people of the whole world can test by the experience of the victories of socialism in the U.S.S.R. the correctness of the general line of our Party which is being carried out by the Stalinist leadership of the C.P.S.U.(B.). This general line is not only the line of our Party, it is the general line of development of our whole country; it has become the flesh and blood of the overwhelming majority of our people. The masses of the people are being trained by it, the workers and collective farmers of our country are competing with each other in carrying it out, it has become the object of Soviet patriotism, in the minds of our people it is inseparable from our great socialist fatherland. (*Applause.*)

Today, Bolshevism is not only a trend in political thought, it is a mighty popular movement. It has extended beyond the limits of the Party, it is becoming the world outlook of the broad masses of our country. Although these masses do not possess Party membership cards, they think the thoughts of our Party, they speak in the language of Bolshevism and their desire is to act like Bolsheviks. Our Party is more and more gaining around itself a stratum of non-Party Bolsheviks to whom Comrade Stalin referred in his last speech. Who are these non-Party Bolsheviks? Mechanics, turners, steel-smelters, dairy maids, pig keepers, the cattle tenders of our collective farms, the shock brigade workers of our fields, collective farm brigade leaders, tractor drivers, harvester combine operators, engineers, business managers, scientists, airmen, engine drivers, parachute-jumpers, Michurinists, Chelyuskinites, the Voroshilov sharp-shooters, our best runners, swimmers, athletes, men and women who are imbued with the desire to be the best in all things and to make our country the best in the world. (*Applause.*) They have been trained by our Party and the Leninist Young Communist League, every one of them possesses a particle of those qualities which constitute the distinguishing features of Bolshevism. They have grown up in the epoch when heroism is acquiring a mass character and is becoming a common occurrence. Their heroic deeds join them with Bolshevism. Our Party is becoming still nearer and dearer to the masses of the people than before, and the masses have no need of the mystical religions of the capitalist countries, or of the multiple party system of pseudo-parliamentary democracy. Vast masses, constituting the reserves of our people are drawing nearer than ever before to the

vanguard of the working class. This living interaction between the Party and the people exists in no other country of the world, there is not, has not been and there never will be such interaction between the people and the bourgeois parties, which either represent a system of rival clans under bourgeois democracy or a party of the barrack-room under the fascist dictatorship.

At the same time, the development of proletarian democracy, the political and cultural growth of the working people and the fact that enormous sections of the people are coming under the influence of our Party imposes greater obligations upon the Communists as leaders and organizers of the masses. The masses are no longer what they were a few years ago. Mere agitation for the general line of the Party is not enough. Length of Party membership and revolutionary services, honourable things though they may be, are not enough in themselves for the masses who are agitating for socialism by their deeds in socialist construction. Today, hundreds of thousands of non-Party Bolsheviks have a record of socialist service behind them, have their standing as shock brigade workers of socialist society. In order to enjoy prestige among these masses of non-Party Bolsheviks the Communists must give greater evidence of their loyalty to the cause of socialism, must be able to show a higher ideological and political level and a higher degree of knowledge of the technique of the work entrusted to them. But this cannot be achieved unless the Party organizations raise the quality of their Party work to a still higher level; unless they still further stimulate Party life and unless they raise Party educational work to still greater heights.

The extension of proletarian democracy strikes a severe blow at the isolation of Communists from the masses, against bureaucracy, and against the arrogance of the high official; and it compels all our Party organizations to still further improve their system of leading the masses. Our masses are not merely masses that have to be won over to the side of the proletarian revolution, they are masses of builders of classless socialist society. And building classless socialist society does not mean merely eliminating classes, it also means overcoming the survivals of capitalism in economics and in the minds of man. A Communist cannot fight among the masses to overcome these survivals unless he, by his own example of political and social life as well as in his personal life, in his conduct towards all those who surround him, shows that he himself has overcome these survivals, or is overcoming them successfully. Hence the unyielding sternness of our Party towards all its members in regard to their moral and political charac-

ter. It does not demand the senseless Christian asceticism of a Savonarola; it is the fight for the socialist individual, freed from the evil heritage of capitalist society.

This socialist re-education of men and women—to the service of which are placed our schools, our press, our art and the whole of our state apparatus—is inseparably bound up with the task of inculcating into the minds of our people the duties of international proletarian solidarity. Our Party and the working people of the Land of Soviets have always placed their obligations to the world proletariat above everything else, and this is the case particularly today when the world is approaching the second round of revolutions and wars, when the question “Who will win?” is being placed with unprecedented sharpness in the international arena.

But the existence of remnants of the defeated class enemy, survivals of capitalism in economics and in the minds of men, and our capitalist encirclement, imperatively demand that the Communists display constant class vigilance, the more so since the fact that enormous masses of people are turning to the side of socialism may create the illusion that the class war has come to an end forever, that the defeated class enemy will quietly submit, and that our Party is insured against any further deviations in the future. Comrade Stalin has repeatedly warned our Party that the growth of the power of the Soviet state will call forth the resistance of the dying classes, and that precisely because they are dying, are going through their last days, they will clutch desperately at the most extreme means of struggle.

No power on earth can break the Bolshevik Party, no difficulties can shake the unity of our ranks, the monolithic character of which is assured not only by the correctness of its general line but also by the increasing homogeneity of the social composition of the country and the establishment of the unity of interests of the overwhelming majority of the population of all the Soviet Republics.

Such are the results of the struggle for socialism in the Land of Soviets, results which are exercising enormous influence upon the whole of international life, and which open a new stage in the development of the world proletarian revolution.

III. THE NEW STAGE IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE WORLD PROLETARIAN REVOLUTION

The victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R. opens a new stage in the development of the world proletarian revolution, accelerating

the growth of the revolutionary consciousness of the masses of working people, calling forth a powerful movement towards socialism in all capitalist countries and causing the peoples to look to the U.S.S.R. as the bulwark of peace and the freedom of peoples, as a bulwark against fascism and imperialist war. This change is not taking place at a dizzy speed, it does not imply that the masses are at one stroke coming over to the position of the revolutionary struggle for the proletarian dictatorship, it is not proceeding smoothly everywhere, it encounters the resistance of counteracting forces, but it is proceeding and receives a fresh impetus as a result of the victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R.

This change is developing in the midst of the deepening and further sharpening of the antagonisms between the world of capitalism and the world of socialism, in the midst of a fierce class struggle in separate countries as well as in the international arena; this development has been retarded in every way by Social-Democracy, which still occupies fairly strong positions among the broad masses. At the same time, this change is taking place amidst a growing fascist movement with the aid of which the bourgeoisie is trying to block the path of development of the revolutionary upsurge.

Lenin said:

“Ten to twenty years of proper relations with the peasantry, and victory on a world scale is ensured (even if the proletarian revolutions—which are growing—are delayed), otherwise twenty to forty years of the torture of whiteguard terror.”¹

Explaining Lenin's words, Comrade Stalin at the Seventh Plenum of the E.C.C.I. in December 1926, asked:

“And what does victory ‘on a world scale,’ mean? Does it mean that such a victory is equivalent to the victory of socialism in a single country? No, it does not mean that. Lenin draws a strict distinction in his works between the victory of socialism in a single country and victory ‘on a world scale.’ By victory ‘on a world scale’ Lenin meant to say that the successes of socialism in our country, the victory of socialist construction in our country, is of such enormous international importance that it (the victory) cannot confine itself to our country but must call forth a powerful movement towards socialism in all capitalist countries; and although it does not coincide with the victory of the proletarian revolution in other countries, at all events, it must be the start-

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Miscellany*, Vol. IV, Russian edition.

ing point of a powerful movement of the proletarians of other countries towards the victory of the world revolution."¹

Today the prophetic words of Lenin and Stalin are coming true. The victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R. is a victory of worldwide significance. It has not yet led to the overthrow of capitalism all over the world; but the powerful movement towards socialism in all capitalist countries has assumed and will continue to assume wider and wider proportions as the contrast between the prosperous socialist world, with its extended proletarian democracy, and the doomed capitalist world, with its torture of whiteguard fascist terror, becomes more and more profound. Mankind has reached that historical dividing line where no amount of growing reaction can prevent the turn of the masses of the people towards socialism. This great change in the minds of the working people of the whole world has not yet developed to its full extent.

This new epoch in the development of the world proletarian revolution is not yet appreciated even by the best people—by Communists whose minds are overwhelmed by the "torture of whiteguard terror" and the scale by which they in the past measured the significance of socialist construction in the U.S.S.R. We are witnessing only the beginning of this great change in the life of mankind. Nevertheless, today, millions of people are already abandoning the century-old convictions and conceptions of the eternity and indestructibility of the capitalist system. Enormous masses of people are beginning to doubt the wisdom and expediency of a social system based on the division of men and women into rich and poor, into idlers and pariahs of labour, into slaveowners and slaves. The prestige of the ruling classes, of their state, of their power, of their church, which blesses the capitalist system, of their bourgeois science, which justifies it, and of bourgeois culture, which is in their service, is breaking down.

The masses of the people were told that socialism means universal degradation. With their own eyes they now see that socialism means the revival, the blossoming forth, the regeneration of the masses of the people.

They were told that socialism means the dividing up of property, the nationalization of women, crude materialism which crushes all individuality, the loss of personal liberty, and living in public barracks. They now see that socialism means collective property which overcomes selfish, brutal avarice, that it means genuine social equality for women, the great cult of motherhood, the birth of a new, heroic man who is

¹ J. Stalin, *Once Again on the Social-Democratic Deviation*.

ready to perform superhuman exploits for the emancipation of the working people; they see that socialism means liberty guaranteed by a system which knows not the enslavement of man by man, that it means the abolition of barrack-room standardization, and that it gives tremendous scope for the creativeness of the masses determined by the growth of each individual.

And the masses read the magnificent story about the new, rational and just social system, not in books, not in the pages of Thomas More and Saint-Simon who depicted a remote ideal of a reconstructed human society, but in the life and struggles of a people one hundred and seventy million strong, a people which has shown the whole world the system it has built in actual being, built amidst sufferings and difficulties and joyous victories, a system bearing the healing scars of the ulcers of its past, with the strong socialist muscles of its present, and the inexhaustible strength of its future.

By its work of creation, the result of which can be touched with the hands, seen with the eyes, grasped by the mind, this people has shown that socialism ensures the mighty development of the productive forces at a time when in the capitalist world they are decaying and being destroyed. It has shown that socialist economy knows no crises of overproduction, that under socialism the scourge of unemployment does not doom the best and industrious section of the people to severe misfortune, that want, starvation and death do not haunt the working-class districts and do not exterminate generations of workers without shot and shell, that the U.S.S.R. is the only country in the world in which the full right to bread and work has been achieved for the whole population.

And the people who are still bearing the burden of capitalism with its crises and unemployment are beginning to move in the way Comrade Stalin said. For them socialism is not merely some magically invented doctrine, a doctrine that has still to be tested by experience; it already exists on an extensive territory stretching from the Berezina to Vladivostok, it is already part of the lives of one hundred and seventy million people, it is the living experience of a country which represents a gigantic laboratory for the building of a new socialist society. Socialism is a vital necessity for all the peoples; it is their only hope amidst an ocean of despair of the poverty-stricken masses, it is their anchor of salvation in a world which, like a ship which has sprung a leak, is going to the bottom.

But this people, one hundred and seventy million strong, who formerly wore bast shoes, rag gaskins, and drab home-spun cloth, who

ate duck weed and acorns in the famine years of the tsarist regime, who were doomed to live in filth and stench in their wretched hovels lit by dim rush lights, are now solving another problem of socialism not less important than the development of productive forces, viz., of raising their standard of living to a height that is inaccessible in any capitalist country in the world. Unlike capitalism, socialism did not have centuries in which to solve this problem. It did not possess billions in gold, nor the age-long experience of the capitalist states; but what the Soviet government has done for the masses in the course of a few years cannot be compared with anything in history.

Let us agree that it has not yet entirely solved this problem. Had it done so the world would have looked entirely different today, the cause of capitalism would have been utterly lost, the cause of the world proletarian revolution would be moving forward with gigantic strides. But the new stage in the development of our socialist country expressed by Stalin's slogan about care for human beings is evidence that this problem will be solved within the next few years.

Already the ruling classes are beginning to lose the 'helm of government over the masses of working people who are being set in motion, not by half a score of alleged agents of the Comintern, but by the socialist successes of the peoples of the U.S.S.R., who, by the hands of the working people are steadily creating socialist well-being for the benefit of all working people. And the masses of the workers throughout the world are beginning to move.

Capitalism can no longer ensure them, and will never ensure them, the pre-war standard of living. Even if the bourgeoisie does succeed in extricating itself from the clutches of the crisis and depression for a time, it cannot restore to the workers even the standard of living they had before the crisis of 1929. The European working class is not rising to the level of the American worker, as the reformists foretold; the American worker is sinking to the level of the majority of the European workers, as the Bolsheviks foresaw. The colonial workers are not becoming "decolonialized" and are not catching up with the wages of the European white worker; the European white worker is sinking more and more to the level of the colonial coolie.

In a number of capitalist countries European workers are already being treated as if they were the inhabitants of a conquered colony. The fascist governments are depriving them of all the gains they won as a result of decades of class struggle, they are dissolving the workers' organizations, are suppressing the workers' press, are killing the active workers in the labour movement, are establishing in the factories the

unrestricted power of the employers, are imposing tribute upon the workers in the form of so-called "voluntary" contributions which are deducted from their miserable wages, they are organizing forced labour camps for the workers, they are insulting their class consciousness and degrade their human dignity by attempting to inculcate into the minds of the masses of the workers the barbarous, chauvinist ideology of hounds foaming at the mouth with rage against other nations.

But fascism is not only internal war against the working class, it is also external imperialist war.

The working class realizes that the bourgeoisie is dragging it into military catastrophes of a force and dimension unprecedented in the history of war. Socialism in the U.S.S.R. on the one side, and the capitalist offensive, fascism and war in the capitalist countries on the other side—this is what is now revolutionizing the world working class.

And the working class is more and more turning its eyes to the Land of Socialism, for in it it sees the great material force which is standing across the path of tyrannical capital, of raging world reaction and of the outbreak of new imperialist wars. (*Applause.*)

The victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R. is setting in motion broad masses of the peasantry who are suffering from the extremely severe agrarian crisis. The ruin of millions of peasants is being accelerated by the very nature of small peasant property which cannot employ complex machinery and therefore makes peasant labour unprofitable. But the peasants in capitalist countries see the Land of Soviets, where the amalgamation of private peasant farms into collective farms permits the mechanization of agriculture, abolishes the contradiction between the low technique of agriculture and the high technique of industry and raises the value of peasant labour.

They see that the policy of eliminating the kulaks as a class has led to the abolition of exploitation in the countryside, that by collectivization it has completely eradicated every possibility of differentiation in the countryside and has created the conditions for the prosperous existence of the masses of collective farmers. The future successes of collectivization in the U.S.S.R. will more and more break down the anti-socialist prejudices of the peasants in the capitalist countries.

The peasants have learned from their own back-breaking toil that private property is like the convict's chain which fastens the convict to his wheelbarrow. They were frightened by the first difficulties that accompanied the socialist reorganization of agriculture in the U.S.S.R. But it is the difficulties of their own form of farming that are constantly

increasing: indebtedness to the banks and usurers, bondage to the produce merchants, the low prices prevailing on the market and the high rents that are strangling them. They would not believe in the possibility of collective labour and thought that it would mean the reign of universal idleness. But what do they get out of their hard labour except want, sorrow and calloused hands?

They thought that socialism in agriculture would lead to universal poverty. But capitalism has robbed them of all they had and sent millions of peasant families begging on the road. They thought that fascism was protecting their interests when it proclaimed the right of their oldest sons to inherit their property. But what are their other, dispossessed children to do in view of the mass unemployment in the cities? The collective farm system in the Land of Soviets daily shows the peasants in capitalist countries the advantages of collective farming which has now overcome the difficulties of the period of reconstruction. The new Stalin collective farm rules, drawn up on the basis of a combination of the stimulus of public interest with that of private interest, has called forth a fresh wave of labour enthusiasm in the collective farms. Day after day collective farming is revealing to the masses of the peasants of the whole world a life of prosperity and growth of culture in the countryside.

There is also, a movement among the urban petty bourgeoisie whose hopes fascism cruelly dashed to the ground from the moment it came to power. How many large department stores have been closed in Germany since the advent of the fascists to power? Did the stock exchange speculators, bankers and usurers lose a single hair of their heads; or was it the storm troopers who demanded a new "revolution" against the thieving bankers and stock exchange sharks who lost their hair when their heads fell? How much of the small traders' debts has been annulled by the fascist government? Or has that government given relief only to the trusts and banks? How many taxes have been reduced for the small urban artisans and tradesmen? Or have they been reduced only for millionaires? How many children of humble burghers have won for themselves a proper place in the state apparatus of the "Third Reich," or is it the golden youth of the Prussian Junkers that is squeezing out the deceived storm troopers?

But socialism has actually abolished the bankers and the speculators, has carried out a real revolution against capital, has really ensured a worthy human existence for the small artisan and tradesman by bringing him into the great process of socialist construction; it has really given his children the opportunity of studying in the workers'

and peasants' universities, thus opening up for them a bright, socialist future.

The best section of the intelligentsia, who see that socialism alone has no overproduction of scientists, engineers, technicians, writers, artists and actors, are also turning towards socialism. They see that only under socialism does talent, ability and industry, and not the power of money and the support of influential people, open the road for young talent. They see that the socialist system alone ensures the real, flourishing growth of a new socialist culture, gives a mighty impulse to and opens wide prospects for creative effort. They see that socialism alone rouses the latent forces of the people and starts the springs of genuine people's creativeness. And these, the best people, who have despaired of the world of potbellied philistines and fascist obscurantism, are fleeing from the stake where human thought is burned, are fleeing from the fascist axes which cut off disobedient heads, are fleeing from the blood-streaked spittle with which degenerate gangs defile human culture, are fleeing from all this to the land where not only politicians and organizers of the working class but also Voltaire, Einstein, Rolland, Barbusse and Gorky are prized. (*Applause.*)

And the big and small peoples are beginning to move because before their very eyes the U.S.S.R. is consolidating its economic system not by conquering foreign markets—for which a furious struggle is going on in the capitalist world—but by raising the well-being of the masses of its own people; not by sanguinary wars such as capitalism waged, marching to triumph over the bones of nations, but by fraternal cooperation between the one hundred and fifty nationalities that inhabit the U.S.S.R. in the work of building socialism; not by plundering other countries by imposing monstrous indemnities upon them, but by rendering enormous material assistance to the former tsarist colonies which are resuscitating their national economy on a socialist basis; not by enslaving colonies, without which modern capitalism cannot exist, but by the socialist industrialization of the economically backward regions which are now being converted into advanced national republics; not by fettering loans as a result of which the country is surrendered to the foreign capitalists to be plundered, but by the forces and means of the people themselves who alone are the creators and masters of their historic destiny.

And what is the fate of the peoples in the capitalist countries? What have they got out of the conquest of foreign markets, out of wars of conquest, and the loans obtained on usurious terms? Have these

enriched the people, or have they enriched a handful of magnates of capital? Have they removed the rags and tatters of poverty, have they given work to the millions of unemployed who have been forced out of industry forever, have they improved the material conditions of the masses?

America is the richest country in the world. It has all the conditions for a self-contained economy: the natural wealth of the country, an enormous territory, its own highly developed agriculture capable of feeding two such countries as America, a powerful industrial apparatus which if worked to full capacity could raise the national income to 300,000,000,000 dollars per annum. Only a few years ago the American people believed Hoover when he said that America was the land of "eternal prosperity," that the capitalist system of America was superior to the socialist system in the U.S.S.R., that America was the land of the highest wages and of the highest standard of living in the world. But what does America look like today?

Ten million unemployed, reductions of wages, hundreds of thousands of farms wrecked, the "middle class" ruined, an enormous increase in the lumpen-proletarian population of the towns, the growth of armed robbery by the gangsters, the bankruptcy of the N.R.A. policy—such is the picture of America today. The fact that America more than any other country became rich on war orders during the world imperialist war and the fact that at Versailles she dictated her will to both the victor and vanquished states did not help her in the least; nor did her imperialist penetration into the Latin American countries, nor her open-door policy in China.

The American people today are asking themselves in alarm, what is to be done with the huge army of unemployed, with the extensive apparatus of production, to the development of which capitalism sets a limit. They have learned from their own experience the truth of Marx's law that the rate of profit serves as shackles which hinder the development of the productive forces of capitalist America. From the experience of the U.S.S.R. they see that the growth of public consumption due to the enormous leap forward of the material and spiritual culture of the socialist individual provides unlimited possibilities for the development of production. From the experience of America they learn that capitalism is anarchy in production which, within the framework of capitalist relationships, cannot be subjected to any system of N.R.A. planning.

But the U.S.S.R. shows them a living type of planned socialist economy, secure against the crisis of overproduction, in which the

master, the proletariat, reorganizes the various branches of production, mechanizes human labour with the object of still further reducing labour time. The mechanization of agriculture supplies a mighty impetus to the further development of the productive forces, and by steadily raising the material and cultural level of the masses it expands to an unlimited degree the capacity of home consumption. (*Applause.*)

There is another rich country—France. The French people were the “victors” in the greatest war that ever took place in history. The peoples of our country were defeated in that war. As a result of its victory, France redrew the map of Europe in the way she desired. An attempt was made to alter the geography of our country to suit France and her Allies. France imposed the Versailles Treaty upon Germany, while German imperialism imposed upon us a not less predatory peace, namely, Brest. After the war, France enjoyed hegemony in Europe and, in conjunction with her Allies, dictated her will to the peoples inhabiting it. Our country was isolated from the whole of the capitalist world and surrounded by a barbed wire entanglement of hostility.

But the people of those states who regard themselves as victors are now asking themselves in alarm what they have got out of the victory in the imperialist war? Have the indemnities which Entente imperialism imposed upon several generations of the German people in any way benefited the masses of the people of those countries? Does the gold reserve accumulated in the vaults of the national banks of those countries serve as a guarantee against budget deficits? The victory of Entente arms resulted in Versailles; Versailles gave the German people fascism; German fascism is giving the French people feverish preparations for a war, which, as on the eve of August 1914, once again threatens both the French and German people. And formerly backward Russia, the object of imperialist designs, a country beaten in the imperialist war, exhausted by civil war, the land which suffered the Brest peace, took the path of socialism and became the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, a mighty land of victorious socialism. (*Applause.*)

And it achieved this victory not only because it took a different path from that taken by France, but also because it took a different path from that taken by Germany. It reached the annulment of the Brest peace by the road of proletarian revolution and socialism, whereas the German people smashed the Versailles peace by taking the path of bourgeois counter-revolution and fascism. Fascism has been torturing the

German people for three years. But what has it given it in compensation for its lost bourgeois democracy? The cessation of reparation payments? But it was the government of the Weimar Republic that stopped paying reparations. No German government could pay these reparations under the conditions of severe crisis. The victory of the Saar plebiscite? But the government of the Weimar Republic would have received a larger number of votes in favour of joining the Saar with Germany than fascism obtained. The restoration of conscription? Yes, but the German people will have to pay for this "bloodless" victory with their blood. Feverish chauvinism and outbursts of bellicose ecstasy cultivated by fascism are not leading the peoples to happiness. The German people have already had to pay for this sort of thing in the form of the disaster of 1918 and the Versailles peace.

Has fascism established firm, bourgeois order? But June 30 revealed bloody chaos in the fascist regime. Not a single dying system has ever managed to save itself from doom by means of terror. Has fascism given emancipation from slavery to the usurers? Who in Germany today believes this demagogic point in the fascist program? Has it abolished the class struggle? But what do the brutal torture of the German people, the concentration camps, resounding with the groans of the front-rank fighters of the working class of Germany, the ruthless daily executions indicate if not the fear of the bourgeoisie and the inherent weakness of the fascist system? Has it increased industrial output? But output has dropped to 87 per cent of that of 1928, whereas that of the U.S.S.R. has trebled. Has it increased the national income? But it has dropped 60 per cent, whereas that of the U.S.S.R. increased more than twofold. Such are the results of the liquidation of Versailles by fascist methods. Such is the unvarnished truth about the "victories" of the "Third Reich."

The Italian people have similar results to show after thirteen years of fascist dictatorship. A steady decline in wages, increased unemployment, ruin of the peasantry, impoverishment of the whole Italian people, a lowering of the standard of living during the past thirteen years by 40 per cent, bringing it only above that of Portugal which is at the bottom of the list among the half-starved peoples of Europe, a feverish race for armaments, colonial aggression crowned by the Abyssinian adventure.

The results are no better in Japan. During the last half century Japan rapidly became industrialized on capitalist lines. She created a modern industrial apparatus while preserving feudal relations. But what has this industrialization given the Japanese people? Japanese

industry literally grew up on the bones of the Japanese workers and Japanese peasants.

Nowhere in the world is there such monstrous exploitation as in Japan. The wages of a Japanese worker are only half of those of the lowest-paid workers in Europe. Japanese working girls and peasant girls are sold like slaves on the market into eternal bondage to the capitalists and as white slaves to brothel keepers. The Japanese peasants, who have to bear this modernized industrial apparatus on their backs, are, together with their families, together with their whole generation, caught in a web of debt and taxes as a fly is caught in a spider's web. Year after year the Japanese people are being ruined more and more. Feudal capitalist exploitation hinders the development of the home market. Hence Japanese capitalism is furiously seeking foreign markets and for this purpose resorts to the notorious dumping and to territorial conquest.

The Japanese imperialists justify these conquests on the ground that the Japanese islands are congested and therefore Japan must seek new territory in Asia. But the Japanese workers and peasants have not obtained more room to live in by the fact that the Japanese army has occupied Manchuria. This occupation has only caused more congestion for the native population of Manchuria. The Japanese imperialists declare that it is their sacred mission to protect the rights of the yellow race in Asia against the white race. Is that why they are oppressing the yellow race in Korea and Formosa, and are waging a predatory war against the people of the same race—the great Chinese people? The Japanese imperialists assert that in order to uphold the prosperity and greatness of the Japanese nation victorious wars against other peoples and the expansion of Japan at the expense of these peoples are necessary.

But during the past half century Japanese arms have not known defeat because they have only been used against weak enemies. Nevertheless, they have not achieved prosperity for the labouring masses of Japan. The Japanese imperialists assert that it is possible to find a way out of the economic crisis, and to put an end to the misfortunes of the people caused by it, by means of war. But Japan has taken this path; nevertheless, the misfortunes of the Japanese people have not diminished, on the contrary, they have increased since the Japanese imperialists have been plundering China.

The war inflation boom may have increased the dividends of the Mitsui and Mitsubishi trusts, but the poverty and ruin of the labouring masses of Japan have not diminished as a result of this, on the

contrary, they have increased. What have the Japanese people gained from the conquest of foreign territory, from the subjection of other people, except an excessively inflated police apparatus which is suppressing not only Koreans and Chinese, but also the Japanese workers and peasants? What did the Japanese people gain from the fact that the tsarist fleet was sunk at Tsushima and that the Russian army was routed at Port Arthur? The strengthening of the positions of the Japanese military clique—an added burden of militarism which still further worsens the position of the labouring masses of Japan, still further contracts the home market and pushes Japan into fresh military adventures.

But as the result of the defeat of the imperialist policy of tsarism, the beaten peoples of old tsarist Russia, by the Revolution of 1905, delivered a blow to tsarist absolutism, to the ruling classes of old Russia, from which the latter never recovered, and by that they paved the way for the great October victory of 1917 over Russian capitalism. The result is that today, on the shores of the Pacific Ocean there borders on Japan, not old tsarist Russia with its decayed political regime, not the Russia of Tsushima and Port Arthur, but the U.S.S.R., the Land of Soviets, a socialist land, a mighty land against which Japanese imperialism will smash its skull if it dares attack her. It will have another Tsushima, but this time a Tsushima for the feudal-capitalist system of its own country. (*Applause.*)

The ruling classes of Great Britain rule over one-third of the globe. Four oceans—the Atlantic, the Pacific, the Arctic and Indian Oceans wash the shores of Britain's possessions. Five hundred million human beings are directly subjected to it. A powerful navy guards the shores of its subject territories and peoples overseas. Britain rules the waves. She holds the key to straits and sea routes. British capitalism is the oldest in the world and dates back nearly four hundred years. The British bourgeoisie had not eighteen years, and not seven years, as the Land of Soviets had, in which to raise the people they rule to prosperity or even to provide them with enough to eat. For decades they exploited colonies and squeezed enormous super-profits out of them. They crushed Germany who tried to share world domination with them. They dominated the world markets. They waged victorious wars and imposed indemnities upon peoples. In short, they made extensive use of all those means so highly lauded by the bourgeoisie as the means for saving the peoples from poverty and disaster.

Has British industry worked better after the war, since Great Britain robbed Germany of her markets? Have the gold fields of the

Transvaal saved Britain from crises? Have the three million British unemployed obtained work by the fact that the British flag flies on the five continents of the globe? Are the five hundred million subjects of Great Britain living better today because Great Britain won the world imperialist war?

The laws of capitalism are inexorable, they are again driving the British people into the vicious circle of a still further worsening of the conditions of the masses, still further enslavement of the colonies, of a new series of imperialist wars, more monstrous than all the wars in history put together. And the hour is near when the masses of the British people will see in the Soviet Union the reflection of their morrow. No longer will they be haunted by the nightmare of the loss of colonies and the disintegration and doom of Great Britain, for there is a country which has risen from the ashes of ruin without plundering other peoples, a land which is a fraternal alliance of peoples, who, by joint efforts, are developing their productive forces on socialist lines. And in the wonderful destiny of this country they will recognize other, non-capitalist laws, they will realize that socialism needs no wars, no indemnities, no foreign markets and no colonies for the purpose of ensuring the prosperity and happiness of the people.

One and a half billion people now in bondage to imperialism will understand that neither British capital nor American missionaries, nor Japanese bayonets, nor the German fascist "civilizers" are required for economic regeneration, that this regeneration is ensured by their own labour freed from the shackles of capitalist property and profit, that only on socialist lines is it possible to achieve, not fictitious, but real independence and freedom of nations. That is why, comrades, the peoples are beginning to move—and this is what is frightening the world bourgeoisie; that is why among the people a steadily growing circle of admiring friends of the Soviet Union is being formed, that is why the bourgeoisie, threatened by these world significant changes, are resorting to fascism, and why the people they rule over will retaliate to this more and more by resolutely going over to the side of socialism.

With the victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R., on the threshold of the second round of revolutions and wars, a new political situation is being created, a new relation of class forces is being brought about in the international arena which makes it incumbent upon the Communist Parties to take up a number of fundamental questions of the strategy and tactics of our struggle in a new way.

The victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R. places in the hands of the Communist Parties in the capitalist countries a powerful instrument with which to influence the broad masses of working people. "At present we exercise our influence on the international revolution mainly by means of our economic policy,"¹ said Lenin in the period when we were bringing the war against the interventionists to a close and were taking up economic construction.

Today we exercise this influence magnified many times by the victory of socialism which is more widely and deeply destroying the mass basis of capitalism. Today this victory is smashing the influence of the compromising policy of Social-Democracy upon the working-class masses; it is increasing the power of attraction of communism for the working-class masses; it is undermining the mass basis of fascism and is creating for the Communist Parties great opportunities for influencing those sections which up till now have been wavering between capitalism and socialism.

Hence, our old methods of agitation and propaganda concerning the U.S.S.R. are no longer adequate; we must now appeal to wider sections of the working population and show them what their lot will be under socialism, illustrating it with the concrete experience of the U.S.S.R. The defence of the U.S.S.R. is becoming the starting point for a broad, general People's Front of classes, of organizations and of political parties which are beginning to render the U.S.S.R. active support. The Friends of the Soviet Union organizations now have an extremely narrow base, confined to intellectuals. But the friends of the U.S.S.R. number millions and are not limited to the thousands who belong to the F.S.U. The old methods of action which smack of pure propaganda have also become obsolete. From the defence of the Soviet Union against anti-Soviet slander we must pass to the offensive against the enemies of the U.S.S.R., we must place them before the judgment of the broad masses. In connection with the peace policy of the Soviet Union, its disarmament proposals, etc., the numerous friends of the U.S.S.R. should adopt forms of the mass movement similar to the peace ballot that was conducted in Great Britain.

Secondly, the victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R. and the further successes of socialist construction make it necessary for the Communist Parties to adopt a more active policy towards the allies of the working class in its revolutionary struggle, such as the main masses

¹ V. I. Lenin, *Collected Works*, Vol. XXVI, Russian edition.

of the peasantry, the urban petty bourgeoisie which is now being ruined, the intellectuals, etc. In their agitation among the peasants, the Communist Parties must utilize the achievements of collectivization in the U.S.S.R. and the vast improvement in the material and cultural level of the collective farmers in order to smash the campaign of lies waged by the bourgeois parties against socialism, and to tear the peasants away from their influence.

In their agitation among the urban petty bourgeoisie the Communists must not only take NEP, which bore a temporary, transitional character, as their starting point but should explain the positive experience of the U.S.S.R. where all the elements who are honestly prepared to work for the benefit of the people are drawn into the work of socialist construction, and where they and their children are ensured a secure present and a happy future under the socialist system. It is necessary to develop a movement among the intellectuals for the defence of culture against fascist barbarism and rally them around the U.S.S.R. as the beacon of the new socialist culture shining forth amidst the abomination and desolation of the capitalist world. The Communists must remember that the victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R. facilitates Communist agitation among these classes and strata and creates the opportunity not only of neutralizing them, but of greatly extending the circle of those who may be won over entirely to the side of the proletariat.

Thirdly, the historical decision of the Seventh Congress of Soviets on the further extension of proletarian democracy by the introduction of equal and direct suffrage and the secret ballot enriches the Marx, Engels, Lenin, Stalin doctrine of the proletarian dictatorship with the concrete experience of its development after the victory of socialism and the building up of classless socialist society. This is not only a great contribution to the theory of the dictatorship of the proletariat, but also a powerful weapon that the Communist Parties in the capitalist countries may wield in their struggle against fascism. Today, it is not sufficient merely to contrast the proletarian dictatorship with the bourgeois dictatorship in its fascist and bourgeois-democratic forms.

Today, the Communists must come out as the sole champions of *genuine people's* democracy, of socialist democracy, guaranteed by equal and direct suffrage and secret ballot under the conditions of socialism and the dictatorship of the proletariat. This will increase our influence among those Social-Democratic masses who until now have been afraid of the proletarian dictatorship, who have stood on the side of bourgeois democracy, failing to see the dark, reactionary

forces of the fascist dictatorship maturing under cover of bourgeois democracy. On the other hand, the further development of proletarian democracy in the U.S.S.R. will help the Communists to gain access to those strata of the working people who, while despairing of bourgeois democracy, and not seeing the revolutionary path to the higher form of democracy, that is Soviet democracy, fell victims to fascist demagoguery which imposed upon them a regime of brutal violence and abolished all rights and liberties.

Fourthly, the role and significance of the U.S.S.R. as *the bulwark of the freedom of nations* increases. Pointing out to the people the living and graphic example of new, socialist democracy, which is inseparably connected with the development of the proletarian dictatorship, contrasting this socialist democracy to the terrorist dictatorship of the bourgeoisie, into which corrupt bourgeois democracy is growing, the Communists must mobilize the masses of the people for the fight against all forms of bourgeois dictatorship, primarily, against fascism. At the same time, by the concrete experience of its own socialist democracy, the U.S.S.R. influences the mobilization of the anti-fascist forces within the capitalist countries as well as in the international arena, and thus intensifies the antagonism between the fascist party and the anti-fascist forces, between the "democratic" states and the fascist states.

Although this antagonism in the capitalist camp is of subsidiary importance compared with the fundamental division of the world into the world of socialism and the world of capitalism, the proletariat cannot adopt a neutral attitude toward the struggle that is going on in the capitalist camp. Basing itself on the U.S.S.R. as the rallying centre of the anti-fascist forces of the whole world, as the decisive force in this international anti-fascist front, utilizing international antagonisms among the states with various political regimes, the working class must lead the concentration of the anti-fascist forces in each country and do everything to extend the anti-fascist front in the international arena. The Communists must pursue a still more active anti-fascist policy, bearing in mind that the growing intensification of the class struggle and the greater and greater concentration of the forces of revolution and counter-revolution may transform the anti-fascist movement into a bridge by which the masses can cross to the side of socialism and the proletarian revolution.

Fifthly, the role of the U.S.S.R. as *the bulwark of peace among nations* is growing. The U.S.S.R. needs no foreign wars for the purpose of transforming the world. The people themselves will rise

against their oppressors and do that. The U.S.S.R. needs no wars because in the competition between the two world systems it is the system of socialism that is winning with every day; for it shows the world its superiority over the capitalist system. If the world bourgeoisie left our country in peace for a decade, the U.S.S.R. would be able by its socialist achievements to convince the vast masses of humanity all over the world of the superiority of its system and would transform even the most "peaceful" people who now serve as the bulwark of capitalism into revolutionaries opposed to capitalism.

But the capitalist world does not want to allow the socialist system to develop peacefully. It cannot exist without wars, and it is pulling the working people, full steam ahead, into new wars. And in the face of the threatening danger of a new disaster, the peoples are turning their eyes towards the country whose mighty armed forces are still restraining the instigators of imperialist war. If the bourgeoisie carried out a really free plebiscite in their countries to ascertain what the people wanted—war or socialism—they would learn the secret of the rapid growth of the influence of the U.S.S.R. among the peoples of the whole world.

The U.S.S.R. rallies and groups around itself all those who do not want war. These are not only the vast masses of working people of town and country, not only classes, their parties and organizations in the various countries; these are whole nations and states whose independence is threatened by war; these are even the bourgeois governments of important imperialist countries which today are not interested in war. What their motives may be is a matter of secondary importance at the present time.

Relying on the U.S.S.R., the proletariat must create within each country a broad general People's Front for the struggle against war and unite the broad masses of the people into a united front against the instigators of war. And this makes it necessary for the Communists to substitute for the old, amateurish methods of conducting isolated, short, anti-war campaigns, such a broad and coordinated struggle against war that would, on the basis of the peace policy of the U.S.S.R., draw into its ranks all the anti-war forces on a national as well as on an international scale; a struggle that would combine within itself all the various forms of action: street demonstrations, speeches in Parliament, convening international conferences of workers' organizations, the creation of a close network of anti-war committees, etc. Today, shooting from the old-fashioned shotgun of small campaigns in defence of peace is quite inadequate when the Com-

munists can use the tanks of the broad people's movements against the menace of imperialist war.

By popularizing to the widest possible extent the successes of the Stalinist peace policy pursued by the U.S.S.R., which brilliantly shows how the predatory plans of the instigators of war may be thwarted, the Communists must abandon the fatalist view that it is impossible to prevent the outbreak of war, that it is useless fighting against war preparations—a view that arose from the hitherto extremely limited dimensions of the anti-war movement.

Sixthly, the significance of the U.S.S.R. has still further increased *as the fortress of the world proletarian revolution* and has thus greatly strengthened the position of the working class of the world in its struggle against capital. The *relative importance of the proletariat of the U.S.S.R.* in the world revolutionary movement, the leading role of the proletariat of the U.S.S.R., and the prestige of the C.P.S.U.(B.) among the working people of the whole world have increased. The socialist victories of the U.S.S.R. are becoming a mighty lever in bringing the masses of the workers in the capitalist countries under the influence of the Communist Parties.

The home and foreign policies of the U.S.S.R. help the Communist Parties to gain access to those masses which hitherto have remained outside of Communist influence. Thanks to this, the policy of the Communist International itself obtains a more concentrated, more effective striking direction. The struggle is no longer the "guerrilla warfare" of separate units of the movement, now rushing forward and subjecting themselves to defeat, now lagging behind the general pace of advance and thereby subjecting others to defeat—it is now guided by international strategy and tactics which have been carefully weighed and strictly calculated, which take into account the sum total of forces in operation, and all chances of success or failure.

The relative importance of the U.S.S.R. has also grown in world economics and politics and this increases the significance of the world labour movement and of its Communist vanguard. The vanguard of this movement is now emerging from the propaganda period of its development, it is itself becoming an effective force in the great international policy of the working class and can set itself bolder and greater tasks than it has done hitherto. Relying on the U.S.S.R., this vanguard of the working class can more resolutely influence events and more often change their direction.

This in turn strengthens the position of the U.S.S.R. in its struggle for peace, for liberty and for socialism. The U.S.S.R. now is not

the country it was seven years ago. The U.S.S.R. sets itself great tasks, commands enormous resources for the fulfilment of these tasks, and can achieve greater successes than it has hitherto. Our relations with the capitalist encirclement in the new stage that we are now entering are founded on a somewhat different basis than that of seven years ago. We can now talk differently both to our enemies and to our friends. (*Applause.*) And the world proletariat realizes the increased might of the Land of Soviets, and confidence in its own strength grows.

This confidence of the proletariat will grow as the material might of victorious socialism grows. And this confidence itself will grow into an enormous material force which no capitalist fortress will be able to withstand. This solidarity, this unity and effective cooperation between victorious socialism in the U.S.S.R. and the working people of the whole world fighting for their emancipation holds out the great prospect of the inevitable collapse of capitalism and the emancipation of mankind from the yoke of exploitation, reaction, fascism and predatory wars. Millions of people throughout the world are becoming more and more convinced that the cause of their emancipation and the successes of the land of victorious socialism are inseparable from one another. They see and know that our socialist victory, our socialist factories, our collective farm fields, the whole of our might and all our gains, belong not only to the peoples of the U.S.S.R. but to the working people of the whole world. (*Applause.*)

We never forget what Comrade Stalin said:

"The working class of the U.S.S.R. is part of the world working class. We have triumphed not only as a result of the efforts of the working class of the U.S.S.R., but also as a result of the support of the working class of the world. Without this support we would long ago have been torn to bits."¹

Our strength and our achievements belong not only to the peoples of the U.S.S.R., not only to the Communist vanguard, but to the working class of all countries—to the workers affiliated to the Amsterdam Federation of Trade Unions, to the workers who follow the lead of the parties affiliated to the Second International, to the unorganized workers and to the workers who are forced to join the fascist organizations. Our socialist achievements belong to the labouring population of Chapei, to the Negroes of Liberia, to the Chinese, the Hindus, the

¹ J. Stalin, "The Tasks of Business Managers," *Leninism*.

Malayans; they belong to the working people of the whole world irrespective of nation and race, language and colour, to all those who are fighting exploitation and oppression. (*Applause.*)

Millions of people are rallying more and more closely around the U.S.S.R., the fatherland of the working people of all countries, for they are beginning to understand that as in peace, so in war, the interests of strengthening the U.S.S.R., increasing its might, ensuring its victory on all sectors of the struggle, entirely coincide with the interests of all working people in their struggle against exploiters, and help to bring on the triumph of the world proletarian revolution.

He who desires the victory of socialism all over the world, he who desires fraternity and peace among the nations, he who desires to see an end of exploitation, fascism and imperialist oppression, cannot but be on the side of the U.S.S.R. Defence of the U.S.S.R., assisting it to achieve victory over all its enemies, should determine the activities of every revolutionary organization, of every Communist, of every Socialist, of every honest democrat, of every non-party worker, of every peasant, of every urban toiler and of every intellectual. But this imposes a great obligation upon our Party, upon our working class, upon our nation of builders of socialism towards the workers and toilers of the whole world. Comrade Stalin said:

“We must move forward so that the working class of the whole world, looking at us, might say: ‘Here is my vanguard, here is my shock brigade, here is my working-class power, here is my fatherland; they are promoting their cause which is our cause, well, let us support them against the capitalists and spread the cause of the world revolution.’”¹ (*Applause.*)

And Comrade Stalin teaches our Party, our workers and our country “to remain loyal to the end to the cause of proletarian internationalism, to the cause of the fraternal alliance of the proletarians....”

We know what remaining loyal to the end to the cause of proletarian internationalism means when the bourgeoisie is hurling the working people of the capitalist countries into the abyss of imperialist war and fascism. Our Party, under the leadership of its Leninist Central Committee, under the tried, firm and wise guidance of our great Stalin, has been loyal to this cause in fulfilling Lenin’s behest and working untiringly to transform NEP Russia into socialist Russia.

¹ *Ibid.*

(*Applause.*) Comrades, this socialist Russia now stands before you, before the workers of the whole world! (*Applause.*)

Under Stalin's leadership our Party has been and is devotedly serving the cause of proletarian internationalism in setting itself the task of building socialism in our country amidst a ring of capitalist enemies. This victory is apparent today. Today under Stalin's leadership our Party is completing the edifice of socialist society; it has made the U.S.S.R. a mighty base for the world proletarian revolution; it has not only preserved but has to an enormous degree increased the power of attraction of socialism among the working people in the capitalist countries. Under the leadership of our Leninist Central Committee with Stalin at its head our Party has been and is serving to the end the cause of proletarian internationalism in having strengthened and in now strengthening the power of defence of the Land of Soviets. (*Loud applause.*)

And if today the working people of all countries are not standing unarmed before their class enemy, if today in their struggle for emancipation they look with hope to the state of the proletarian dictatorship, to the land of victorious socialism, to the mighty bulwark of peace and freedom of the nations, to the U.S.S.R., this great achievement is the result of Stalin's policy of remaining loyal to the end to the cause of proletarian internationalism. (*Applause.*)

And our Party, our people, our country, trained by Lenin and Stalin, are steadfastly loyal and will remain loyal to this cause of proletarian internationalism no matter what trials history may subject us to. Every one of us will remain loyal to proletarian internationalism to our very last efforts, to our last breath, to our last drop of blood. (*Stormy applause and shouts of "Hurrah!" All rise.*) *That is why, comrades, the exploited and oppressed in all parts of the world regard our land of victorious socialism as their fatherland; that is why they regard our Party and our working class as the shock brigade of the world proletariat; that is why they regard our Stalin as the great, wise and beloved leader of the whole of toiling humanity.* (*Stormy applause.*)

May the invincible cause of proletarian internationalism live and grow!

Long live the U.S.S.R., the fatherland of the working people of the whole world! (*Applause.*)

Long live our Stalin! (*Stormy applause, rising to an ovation. All rise; loud cheers, cries of "Hurrah!" "Banzai!" "Rot Front!" "Long live Soviet power!" "Long live Comrade Stalin!" The delegates sing the "Internationale" in their various languages.*)

MARTY, speaking on behalf of a number of delegations, makes the following statement with regard to Comrade Manuilsky's report:

Comrades, Comrade Manuilsky's comprehensive report, which was so well illustrated with convincing figures, has shown us how great and decisive is the victory of socialism in the Soviet Union.

The Revolution of October 1917 had already proved to the workers throughout the world that workers are capable of overthrowing a modern imperialist and strongly centralized state and of taking power into their own hands. The years that followed proved to us that the workers are also capable of maintaining themselves in power. The balance-sheet which Comrade Manuilsky has just drawn up shows that a new era has begun in the history of mankind, that socialism is possible and that it is assuming a fixed shape.

Those who—like the leaders of the Second International—still maintain that the proletariat must be educated before it can seize power, are refuted by the magnificent example of the Soviet Union which says: On the contrary, the proletariat must first seize power by revolutionary means; then the working class and the peasantry will bring forth, out of their own ranks, hundreds of thousands of skilled workers and qualified engineers, tractor drivers and agricultural experts, physicians and scientists, all of whom will work enthusiastically to build socialism.

Yes, comrades, it is precisely because the domination of capital has been overthrown that today a young generation full of life, and ardour and vigour—the new man of a new society—is growing up in the Land of Soviets and this at a time when in the capitalist countries a hopeless young generation is wasting away and degenerating.

After Comrade Manuilsky's report, one sees even more clearly what is the object of the bestial terror of the fascists, those most reactionary sections of the bourgeoisie. These creatures in the pay of big capital know quite well that the building of socialism in the Soviet Union, which has a tremendous power of attraction for the working-class masses throughout the world, signifies the end of capitalism. But at the same time it also explains the rising wave of sympathy and enthusiasm for the Soviet Union among the starved and oppressed of the whole world. This also imposes upon every honest worker, upon every working-class organization, and upon all our Parties, the duty of doing everything to ensure a victory for the Soviet Union in case it is attacked by its enemies.

Comrades, how has this revolution, which is unique in the history of mankind, and which Comrade Manuilsky has so brilliantly described

to us—how has this revolution triumphed? For this is what we must grasp. It has triumphed, in the first place, thanks to the energy, firm will, enthusiastic work and unity of the great Bolshevik Party. It has triumphed because a great genius—Lenin—created this democratically centralized “Party of a new type” which became rooted in the factories, because he developed it and led it in the struggle and to victory: It has triumphed because Lenin provided this Party with an unfailing compass—Marxism-Leninism.

But such gigantic work could be accomplished only because this Party has had a firmly knit and flexible Marxist leadership. This was and is the role of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party, and we welcome the vast prestige which it enjoys, not only among the masses of the working people of the Soviet Union, but also among working people throughout the world. And furthermore, comrades: after Lenin departed from us, an outstanding man in this Central Committee took Lenin’s banner in his firm hand and—never hesitating—has ever since shown us the right path. When we listened to Comrade Manuisky’s report, many things seemed to us plain and clear; but they were not so plain and clear to all at the moment when the decisions had to be taken.

Time and again the Revolution came to a parting of the ways. Today it is quite obvious to us that socialist construction with the building up of great industrial centres and electric power plants had to be launched. But that was not quite so obvious in the years when the First Five-Year Plan was launched. At that time there were those who advised the Party to follow the line of least resistance and to renounce the road opening up the vistas which Comrade Manuisky has just shown to us. At that time the Party was advised to follow the road of satisfying the most urgent needs, of importing articles of general consumption and of building up primarily the manufacturing industries.

Today everybody realizes that, if this line had been followed, the Revolution would have been plunged into enormous difficulties and perhaps brought to ruin. But this wrong line was not followed. Why? Because the man who held Lenin’s banner firmly in his hand pointed out the right road at a time when none of the others could see it.

There were some people who raised an outcry and insisted that the Five-Year Plan could not be immediately tackled with the small number of skilled workers and technicians available at the time. The man who held Lenin’s banner aloft brought it about that, in the course of the struggle and out of the struggle, hundreds of thousands of these

trained mass forces emerged; and each one was placed where he could render his best.

When the First Five-Year Plan was fulfilled the capitalists smiled disdainfully and declared: "We shall wait and see what the Bolsheviks are going to do about the agrarian revolution. They will never be able to realize their plans of collectivization."

Not to have accomplished collectivization and thus to have stopped half-way would have meant that capitalist elements would have re-emerged, slowly but steadily, from individual farming; it would inevitably, directly or indirectly, have imperiled the gains of the October Revolution. Today—Comrade Manuilsky's report has once again clearly proved it to us—collectivization is firmly established in the countryside. The kulak class has been eliminated, and the collective farm peasants have attained a standard of living of which they never could have even dreamed before. This was likewise achieved because at the crucial moment the man who is holding Lenin's banner aloft in his firm hand showed the right way.

Yes, comrades, we must say: After Lenin's death the Revolution has had a helmsman who at every difficult stage could point out the right way, and steer along the right way, and—what was even more difficult—was able to bring it about that age-old habits implanted by feudalism and capitalism have been broken. The man who is responsible for the magnificent successes of today and who has helped the Party to bring about the triumph of socialism, thereby laying the strongest and most powerful basis for the world revolution—which fact the Congress cannot but establish with due appreciation—that man is our Comrade Stalin. (*Loud applause.*)

In our opinion there seems to be no need for a discussion on Comrade Manuilsky's report. You all know, comrades, that in every capitalist country, in every oppressed colonial country millions upon millions of workers and labouring people in general, whole oppressed nations in ever increasing numbers, turn their eyes to the Soviet Union as the beacon showing the way towards their emancipation. In the coming days and weeks, when, in spite of prison walls and barbed wire barriers, in spite of machine guns and fixed bayonets, Comrade Manuilsky's report—if even only one fragment of it—reaches our comrades languishing in the concentration camps and dungeons of Germany, or on the islands of fascist Italy, they, as well as the longshoremen of New York and Yokohama, or the workers of Paris and Shanghai, will say: For the present we are still in the hands of our class enemy; we are still under the yoke of our class enemy; the bourgeoisie is still in a

position to torment us, to starve us; but it will not be able to hold back the proletarian revolution, to prevent the downfall of cruel capitalist rule, which will be overthrown everywhere, as it has already been overthrown by the workers of the Land of Soviets.

This is the highest tribute that can, and surely will, be paid to Comrade Manuilsky's report. Therefore we move that the resolution which has been proposed as a basis be adopted by a vote of the Congress. In our opinion, this will be the best finishing touch we can give to Comrade Manuilsky's report.

Long live the land of socialism victorious, the land of a hundred and eighty united peoples, the land of Soviets, the land of socialism!

Long live the victory of socialism throughout the world!

Long live the organizer and leader of victory—the Bolshevik Party and its Leninist Central Committee!

Long live the tried and strong helmsman who has led the Soviet Union to socialism and has shown the way along which the proletariat and all the oppressed of the world will achieve their final emancipation—long live Comrade Stalin! (*Loud and prolonged applause passing into an ovation.*)

FORTY-THIRD SITTING

(August 20, 1935)

REPORTS OF THE COMMISSIONS. ELECTION OF THE EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE. CLOSING SPEECH BY COMRADE DIMITROV

Opening: 9 p.m.

Presiding: Thorez

REPORT OF THE CREDENTIALS COMMISSION

FRANZ: There are 510 delegates present at the Congress, 371 with deciding vote and 139 with voice but no vote. The number of Parties represented has increased from 57 to 65 since the last World Congress. The number of Parties affiliated to the Communist International has increased in the period between the Sixth and Seventh World Congresses from 66 to 76, of which 19 are sympathizing parties.

Two hundred and seventy-five delegates (55 per cent) are workers; at the Sixth Congress there were 214 workers (45 per cent). With respect to age, 42 per cent of the delegates are between 31 and 40; 28.8 per cent between 21 and 30; 28.2 per cent are over 40 years of age, and seven delegates are over 60.

As regards length of Party membership, 53 of the delegates joined the Party before 1917; 330 of the delegates joined the Party between 1917 and 1928, and 104 since 1928. One hundred and seventy-four delegates (29.4 per cent) come from the Social-Democratic Parties; 18 from the anarcho-syndicalists, 3 from the Kuomintang, 5 from the Poale Zion, and 2 delegates from other parties; 330 of the delegates joined the Communist Party directly, without previously belonging to other parties. Among the delegates who have come to the Communist

Parties from the Social-Democratic Parties, there are 57 delegates with a record of 6 to 10 years membership in the Social-Democratic Parties, and 32 with a record of eleven years membership. This shows that a certain number of the higher functionaries of the Social-Democratic Parties are beginning to come over to the Parties of the Communist International. (*The report was unanimously adopted amidst enthusiastic applause, and the credentials of all the delegates were endorsed.*)

REPORT OF THE EDITING COMMISSIONS

GOTTWALD: All the amendments to the resolution on the second item of the agenda, Comrade Dimitrov's report, submitted to the commission were in accord with the principles and the tactical viewpoint of the draft of this resolution. This fact is evidence of the unanimity and unity of the Seventh World Congress. (*The resolution in its final form was adopted unanimously.*¹)

MARTY: The Commission on the resolution on Comrade Ercoli's report has accepted the amendments submitted, which are in part of an editorial nature and in part amendments to the draft. (*The resolution in its final form was adopted unanimously.*²)

ACKERMANN: The Seventh World Congress is the first Congress of the Communist International which is able to place on record the victory of socialism in the Soviet Union. The triumph of the working class and the collective farmers of the Soviet Union is indissolubly bound up with the name of the organizer of this gigantic victory, with the name of the great leader of the working people of the whole world, Stalin. The Commission proposes that the Congress adopt the resolution on the report of Comrade Manuilsky with the amendments made by the Commission. (*The resolution is adopted unanimously.*³)

THOREZ then read a number of telegrams of greeting, including one from a public demonstration of the Cooperative Societies in Prague, in which 60,000 working people participated.

¹ See page 570.

² See page 587.

³ See page 596.

WANG MING moved the admission of a number of parties to the Communist International. (*The proposal was adopted unanimously.*¹)

PIECK proposed to commission the Executive Committee to prepare a number of amendments in the statutes of the Communist International, rendered necessary by new developments and the changed situation, in order that these may be submitted to the next Congress for decision. (*This motion was adopted unanimously.*²)

ELECTION OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

ERCOLI read out in alphabetical order the names of candidates proposed for election to the leading bodies of the Communist International.

(*The proposals were adopted unanimously.*)

THOREZ: Comrade Dimitrov has the floor.

(*Comrade Dimitrov is accorded a stormy ovation by the entire audience as he mounts the rostrum. All rise and greet him with enthusiastic applause. Shouts of "Rot Front", "Banzai!", "Hurrah!", "Long live Comrade Dimitrov!" The band plays a march. Prolonged ovation lasting several minutes.*)

¹ See page 604.

² See page 605.

CLOSING SPEECH BY COMRADE DIMITROV

DIMITROV: Comrades, the work of the Seventh Congress of the Communist International, the Congress of the Communists of all countries, of all continents of the world, is coming to a close.

What are the results of this Congress, what is its significance for our movement, for the working class of the world, for the working people of every country?

It has been the Congress of the *complete triumph of unity between the proletariat of the country of victorious socialism, the Soviet Union, and the proletariat of the capitalist countries which is still fighting for its liberation*. The victory of socialism in the Soviet Union—a victory of world-historic significance—gives rise in all capitalist countries to a powerful movement toward socialism. This victory strengthens the cause of peace among peoples, enhancing as it does the international importance of the Soviet Union and its role as the mighty bulwark of the working people in their struggle against capital, against reaction and fascism. It strengthens the Soviet Union as the base of the world proletarian revolution. It sets in motion throughout the whole world not only the workers, who are turning more and more to communism, but also millions of peasants and farmers, and hard-working small townsfolk, a considerable proportion of the intellectuals and the enslaved people of the colonies. It inspires them to struggle, increases their bonds of unity with the great fatherland of all the working people and strengthens their determination to support and defend the proletarian state against all its enemies.

This victory of socialism increases the confidence of the international proletariat in its own forces and in the real possibility of its own victory, a confidence which is itself becoming a tremendously effective force against the rule of the bourgeoisie.

The union of forces of the proletariat of the Soviet Union and

of the militant proletariat and masses of working people in the capitalist countries holds out the great perspective of the oncoming collapse of capitalism and the guarantee of the victory of socialism throughout the whole world.

Our Congress has *laid the foundations for such a wide mobilization of the forces of all working people against capitalism as has never before existed in the history of the working-class struggle.*

Our Congress has set before the international proletariat, as its most important immediate task, that of consolidating its forces politically and organizationally, of putting an end to the isolation to which it had been reduced by the Social-Democratic policy of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie, of rallying the working people around the working class in a wide People's Front against the offensive of capital and reaction, against fascism and the threat of war in each individual country and in the international arena.

We have not invented this task. It has been prompted by the experience of the world labour movement itself, above all, by the experience of the proletariat of France. The great merit of the French Communist Party is that it grasped the need of the *hour*, that it paid no heed to the sectarians who tried to pull the Party hither and thither and hamper the realization of the united front of struggle against fascism, but acted boldly and in a Bolshevik fashion, and, by its pact with the Socialist Party providing for joint action, prepared the united front of the proletariat as the basis for the anti-fascist People's Front now in the making. (*Applause.*) By this action, which accords with the vital interests of all the working people, the French workers, both Communists and Socialists, have once more advanced the French labour movement to first place, to a *leading position* in capitalist Europe, and have shown that they are worthy successors of the Communards, worthy inheritors of the glorious legacy of the Paris Commune. (*Stormy applause; all rise; shouts of "Hurrah!"*; *Comrade Dimitrov turns to the Presidium and, together with all present, applauds Comrade Thorez and the other French comrades in the Presidium.*)

It is the great service of the French Communist Party and the French proletariat that by their fighting against fascism in a united proletarian front they helped to prepare the decisions of our Congress, which are of such tremendous importance for the workers of all countries.

But what has been done in France constitutes only initial steps. Our Congress, in mapping out the tactical line for the years immedi-

ately ahead, could not confine itself to merely recording this experience. It went further.

We Communists are a class party, a proletarian party. But as the vanguard of the proletariat we are ready to organize joint actions between the proletariat and the other sections of the working people interested in the fight against fascism. We Communists are a revolutionary party; but we are ready to undertake joint action with other parties fighting against fascism.

We Communists have other ultimate aims than these parties, but in struggling for our aims we are ready to fight jointly for any immediate tasks which when realized will weaken the position of fascism and strengthen the position of the proletariat.

We Communists employ methods of struggle which differ from those of the other parties; but, while using our own methods in combating fascism, we Communists will also support the methods of struggle used by other parties, however inadequate they may seem, if these methods are really directed against fascism.

We are ready to do all this because, in countries of bourgeois democracy, we want to block the way of reaction and the offensive of capital and fascism, prevent the abolition of bourgeois-democratic liberties, forestall fascism's terrorist vengeance upon the proletariat and the revolutionary section of the peasantry and intellectuals, and save the young generation from physical and spiritual degeneracy.

We are ready to do all this because in the fascist countries we want to prepare and hasten the overthrow of fascist dictatorship.

We are ready to do all this *because we want to save the world from fascist barbarity and the horrors of imperialist war. (Applause.)*

* * *

Here Comrade Weber, a delegate of the German Communist Party, mounted the platform and presented Comrade Dimitrov with an album, saying the following words:

"Comrade Dimitrov, in the name of the delegation of the German Communist Party I deliver this book into your hands, a book of the heroic exploits of the revolutionary fighters of Germany. It was you who by your conduct at the Leipzig trial and your entire subsequent activity served as an example for the German Communist Party, for the German anti-fascists, in their struggle. Accept this book, this record of the heroism of the proletarian fighters of Germany, to whom you have furnished an example to follow, who give up their freedom, their

health, their lives in the cause of the revolution!" (*Comrade Dimitrov accepted the album and warmly embraced Comrade Weber, amidst loud applause, shouts of "Hurrah!" and cheering.*)

* * *

Ours is a Congress of struggle for the maintenance of peace, against the threat of imperialist war.

We are approaching this struggle now in a new way. Our Congress is decidedly opposed to the fatalistic outlook on the question of imperialist war emanating from old Social-Democratic notions.

It is true that imperialist wars are the product of capitalism, that only the overthrow of capitalism will put an end to all war; but it is likewise true that the masses of working people can hinder imperialist war by their militant action.

The world today is not what it was in 1914.

Today on one-sixth of the globe there exists a powerful proletarian state that relies on the material strength of victorious socialism. Guided by Stalin's wise peace policy, the Soviet Union has already more than once brought to naught the aggressive plans of the instigators of war. (*Applause.*)

Today the world proletariat, in its struggle against war, has at its disposal not only its weapon of mass action, as it did in 1914. Today the mass struggle of the international working class against war is coupled with the influence of the Soviet Union as a state, of its powerful Red Army, the most important guardian of the peace. (*Stormy applause.*)

Today the working class is not under the exclusive influence of Social-Democracy participating in a bloc with the bourgeoisie, as was the case in 1914. Today there is the world Communist Party, the Communist International. (*Applause.*) Today the masses of the Social-Democratic workers are turning to the Soviet Union, to its policy of peace, to a united front with the Communists.

Today the peoples of the colonial and semi-colonial countries do not regard their liberation as a hopeless cause. On the contrary, they are passing on more and more to determined struggle against the imperialist enslavers. The best evidence of this is the *Soviet revolution in China* and the heroic feats of the Red Army of the Chinese people. (*Stormy applause and cheers. All rise.*)

The people's hatred of war is constantly gaining in depth and intensity. In pushing the working people into the abyss of imperialist

wars, the bourgeoisie is staking its head. Today not only the working class, the peasantry and other working people, but also the oppressed nations and the weak peoples whose independence is menaced by new wars champion the cause of the preservation of peace. Even some of the big capitalist states, afraid of losing in a new redivision of the world, are *at the present stage* interested in avoiding war.

This gives rise to the possibility of forming a very wide united front of the working class, of all working people and whole nations against the threat of imperialist war. Basing itself on the peace policy of the Soviet Union and on the will for peace of millions upon millions of working people, our Congress has opened up the perspective of developing a wide anti-war front not only for the Communist vanguard but for the working class of the whole world, and for the peoples of every land. The extent to which this world-wide front is realized and comes into operation will determine whether the fascist and other imperialist instigators of war will be able in the near future to kindle a new imperialist war, or whether their fiendish hands will be hacked off by the axe of a powerful anti-war front.

Ours is a Congress of the *unity of the working class*, a Congress of struggle for the united proletarian front.

We entertain no illusions about easily overcoming the difficulties which the reactionary section of the Social-Democratic leaders will place in the path of realizing a united proletarian front. But we do not fear these difficulties. For we reflect the will of millions of workers; for we serve the interests of the proletariat best by fighting for a united front; for the united front is the surest road to the overthrow of fascism and the capitalist system, to the prevention of imperialist war.

At this Congress we have raised high the banner of *trade union unity*. The Communists do not insist on the independent existence of the Red trade unions at all costs. But Communists want trade union unity based on the class struggle and on putting an end, once and for all, to a situation in which the most consistent and determined advocates of trade union unity and of the class struggle are expelled from the trade unions of the International Federation of Trade Unions. (*Applause.*)

We know that not all of the functionaries of the trade unions affiliated to the Red International of Labour Unions have understood and assimilated this line of the Congress. There are still remnants of sectarian self-satisfaction which these functionaries, with our support, must overcome if the line of the Congress is to be carried out firmly.

But we shall carry out this line whatever the cost, and shall find a common language with our class brothers, our comrades in the struggle, the workers at present affiliated to the International Federation of Trade Unions. (*Loud applause.*)

At this Congress we have adopted a course for the formation of a *single mass political party* of the working class, for putting an end to the political split in the ranks of the proletariat, a split caused by the class collaboration policy of Social-Democracy. For us the political unity of the working class is not a manœuvre but a question of the future fate of the entire labour movement. Should there be any people in our midst who approach the question of the political unity of the working class as a manœuvre, we shall fight them as people who cause harm to the working class. Precisely because our attitude on this question is one of absolute seriousness and sincerity, dictated by the interests of the proletariat, we lay down definite fundamental conditions to serve as the basis for such unity. We have not invented these fundamental conditions. They are the result of the experience gained from the sufferings of the proletariat in the course of its struggle. They are also in accordance with the will of millions of Social-Democratic workers, a will engendered by the lessons of the defeats suffered. These fundamental conditions have been tested by the experience of the entire revolutionary labour movement. (*Applause.*)

Since proletarian unity has been the keynote of our Congress, it has been not only a Congress of the Communist vanguard, but a Congress of the entire international working class thirsting for militant trade union and political unity. (*Applause.*)

Though our Congress was not attended by delegates of the Social-Democratic workers nor by non-party delegates, and though the workers forced into the fascist organizations were not represented, the Congress has spoken not only for the Communists but also for these millions of workers. It has expressed the thoughts and feelings of the overwhelming majority of the working class. (*Applause.*) If the labour organizations of various trends were to hold a really free discussion of our decisions among the workers of the whole world, there is no doubt in our minds but that they would support the decisions for which you, comrades, have voted with such unanimity.

So much the more is it our duty as Communists to make the decisions of our Congress in actual fact the property of the whole working class. To have voted for these decisions is not enough. Nor is it enough to popularize them among the members of the Communist Parties. We want the workers belonging to the parties of the Second

International and the International Federation of Trade Unions as well as the workers belonging to organizations of other political trends to discuss these decisions jointly with us, to bring in their amendments and make practical proposals; we want them to deliberate jointly with us as to how these decisions can best be carried into effect, how they, jointly with us, hand in hand, can best realize these decisions in practice.

Ours has been a Congress of a *new tactical orientation for the Communist International*.

Standing firmly on the impregnable position of Marxism-Leninism, which has been confirmed by the whole experience of the international labour movement, and above all by the victory of the great October Revolution, our Congress, acting in the spirit and guided by the method of *living Marxism-Leninism*, has re-examined the tactical lines of the Communist International to meet the changed world situation.

The Congress has adopted a firm decision that the united front tactics must be applied *in a new way*. The Congress emphatically demands that Communists shall not content themselves with propagating general slogans about proletarian dictatorship and Soviet power, but that they shall pursue a definite, active, Bolshevik policy on all internal and foreign political questions arising in their country, on all urgent problems that affect the vital interests of the working class, their own nation and the international labour movement. The Congress insists most emphatically that all tactical steps taken by the Communist Parties be based on a sober analysis of actual conditions, on a consideration of the relation of class forces and of the political level of the widest masses. The Congress demands that every relic of *sectarianism* be abolished from the practice of the Communist movement, as this represents at present the greatest obstacle in the way of the Communist Parties carrying out a real Bolshevik mass policy.

While inspired by the determination to carry out this tactical line and by the conviction that this road will lead our Parties to big successes, the Congress has at the same time taken into account the possibility that the carrying out of this Bolshevik line may not always be smooth sailing, may not always proceed without mistakes, without deviations here and there to the Right or the "Left"—deviations either in the direction of *adaptation and trailing behind events*, or in the direction of *sectarian self-isolation*. Which of these, "speaking generally," constitutes the main danger is a dispute in which only scholastics can engage. The greater and worse danger is that which at any given moment and in any given country represents the greater

obstacle to the carrying out of the line of our Congress, to the development of the correct mass policy of the Communist Parties. (*Applause.*)

The cause of communism demands, not abstract, but *concrete struggle against deviations*; prompt and determined rebuff to all harmful tendencies as they arise, and the timely rectification of mistakes. To replace the necessary concrete struggle against deviations by a peculiar *sport*—hunting imaginary deviations or deviators—is an intolerably harmful distortion. In our Party practice every encouragement must be given to develop initiative in formulating new questions. We must assist in having the questions concerning the activity of the Party discussed from every angle, and not hastily set down as some deviation every doubt or critical remark of a Party member concerning the practical problems of the movement. A comrade who has committed an error must be given an opportunity to correct it in practice, and *only those who stubbornly persist in their mistakes and those who disorganize the Party are to be flayed without mercy.*

Championing, as we do, the unity of the working class, we shall with so much the more energy and irreconcilability fight for *unity within our Parties*. There can be no room in our ranks for factions, or for factional intrigue. Anyone who tries to break the iron unity of our ranks by any kind of factionalism will be made to feel what is meant by the Bolshevik discipline that Lenin and Stalin have always taught us. (*Applause.*) Let this be a warning to those few elements in individual Parties who think that they can take advantage of the difficulties of their Party, the wounds of defeat or the blows of the raging enemy, to carry out their factional plans, and to further their own group interests. (*Applause.*) *The Party is above everything else!* (*Loud applause.*) *To guard the Bolshevik unity of the Party as the apple of one's eye is the first and highest law of Bolshevism!*

Ours is a Congress of *Bolshevik self-criticism and of the strengthening of the leadership of the Communist International and its Sections.*

We are not afraid of pointing out openly mistakes, weaknesses and shortcomings in our ranks, for we are a revolutionary Party which knows that it can develop, grow and accomplish its tasks only if it discards everything hindering its development as a revolutionary Party.

And the work which the Congress has accomplished by its merciless criticism of self-satisfied sectarianism, cut-and-dried schemes and stereotyped practices, sluggishness of thought, substitution of the

methods of leading a Party for the methods of leading masses—all this work must be continued in an appropriate manner in all Parties, locally, in all links of our movement, as this is one of the most essential pre-conditions for correctly carrying into life the decisions of the Congress. (*Applause.*)

In its resolution on the report of the Executive Committee, the Congress resolved to concentrate the *day-to-day leadership* of our movement in the sections themselves. This makes it our duty to intensify in every way the work of forming and training cadres and of reinforcing the Communist Parties with genuine Bolshevik leaders, so that at abrupt turns of events the Parties can quickly and independently find correct solutions for the political and tactical problems of the Communist movement, on the basis of the decisions of the Congresses of the Communist International and the Plenums of its Executive Committee. The Congress, when electing the leading bodies of the Communist International, strove to constitute its leadership of such people as accept the new lines and decisions of the Congress and are ready and able firmly to carry them into life, not from a sense of discipline, but out of deep conviction. (*Applause.*)

It is likewise necessary in each country to ensure the correct application of the decisions adopted by the Congress. This will depend primarily on appropriately testing, distributing and directing the cadres. We know that this is not an easy task. It must be borne in mind that some of our cadres did not go through the experience of Bolshevik mass policy, but were brought up largely along the lines of general propaganda. We must do everything to help our cadres to adapt themselves, to be retrained in a new spirit, in the spirit of the decisions of this Congress. But where the *old wine-skins* prove unsuited for the *new wine*, the necessary conclusions must be drawn—not to spill the *new wine* or spoil it by pouring it into the *old wine-skins*, but to replace the *old wine-skins* by *new ones*. (*Movement in the hall; applause.*)

Comrades, we intentionally excluded from the reports as well as from the decisions of the Congress *high-sounding phrases* on the revolutionary perspective. We did this not because we have any ground for appraising the tempo of revolutionary development less optimistically than before, but because we want to rid our Parties of any inclination to replace Bolshevik activity by revolutionary phrasemongering or barren disputes about the appraisal of the perspective. Waging a decisive struggle against any reliance on spontaneity, we take account of the process of development of the revolution not as passive observers, but as active participants in this process. As a Party

of revolutionary action—fulfilling at every stage of the movement the tasks that are in the interest of the revolution, the tasks that correspond to the specific conditions of the given stage, and soberly taking into consideration the political level of the wide mass of working people—we accelerate, more than in any other way, the creation of the subjective pre-conditions necessary for the victory of the proletarian revolution. (*Applause.*)

Marx said:

*"We must take things as we find them, that is, must utilize revolutionary sentiments in a manner corresponding to the changed circumstances."*¹

This is the gist of the matter. This we must never forget.

Comrades: *The decisions of the World Congress must be brought home to the masses, must be explained to the masses, must be applied as a guide to action by the masses, in short, must be made the flesh and blood of millions of working people!*

It is necessary to strengthen everywhere to the utmost degree *the initiative of the workers in their respective localities, the initiative of the lower organizations of the Communist Parties and the labour movement in carrying out these decisions.*

* * *

When leaving here, the representatives of the revolutionary proletariat must bring to their respective countries the firm conviction that we Communists bear responsibility for the fate of the working class, of the labour movement, responsibility for the fate of our own nation, for the fate of all toiling humanity.

To us, the workers, and not the social parasites and idlers, belongs the world—a world built by the hands of the workers. The present rulers of the capitalist world are but *temporary* rulers.

The proletariat is the *real* master, *tomorrow's* master of the world. (*Stormy applause.*) And it must enter upon its historical rights, take into its hands the reins of government in every country all over the world. (*Applause.*)

We are disciples of Marx and Engels, Lenin and Stalin. We must be worthy of our great teachers. (*Applause.*)

With Stalin at their head the millions of our political army,

¹ K. Marx, Letter to Kugelmann, August 23, 1866.

overcoming all difficulties and courageously breaking through all barriers, must and will level to the ground the fortress of capitalism and achieve the victory of socialism throughout the whole world! (Stormy applause.)

Long live the unity of the working class! Long live the Seventh Congress of the Communist International!

(Stormy applause, rising to an ovation. The band plays the "Internationale," and the delegates join in the singing. Resounding shouts of "Long live Stalin!", "Long live Dimitrov!", "Hurrah!", a triple "Rot Front!" The French delegation sings the "Carmagnole," the Czech delegation sings "Rudy Prapor," the Chinese delegation sings the "March of the Chinese Red Army," the Italian delegation sings "Bandiera Rossa," the German delegation sings "Red Wedding." Cries of "Long live Comrade Dimitrov—the helmsman of the Communist International!", "Hurrah!" Continued applause. Thorez: "Hurrah for the Bolshevik Party and its leader, Comrade Stalin!" Prolonged cheers. Cries of "Hurrah for the Communist International and its helmsman, Comrade Dimitrov!" Cheers. The band plays the "Internationale.")

RESOLUTIONS AND DECISIONS

THE ACTIVITY OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

*Resolution on the Report of Comrade Pieck
Adopted August 1, 1935*

1. The Seventh World Congress of the Communist International endorses the political line and practical activity of the Executive Committee of the Communist International.

2. The Seventh World Congress of the Communist International approves the proposals of the Executive Committee of the Communist International of March 1933, October 1934 and April 1935 to the national Sections and the leadership of the Second International for joint action in the struggle against fascism, the offensive of capital and war. Expressing its regret that, to the detriment of the working class, all these proposals were rejected by the Executive Committee of the Second International and by most of its Sections, and noting the historic significance of the fact that the Social-Democratic workers and a number of Social-Democratic organizations are already struggling hand in hand with the Communists against fascism and for the interests of the working people, the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International enjoins the Executive Committee of the Communist International and all parties affiliated with the Communist International to *strive* also in the future by every means to *establish a united front on a national as well as international scale*.

3. The Seventh World Congress of the Communist International records the growing revolutionary influence of the work and slogans of the Communist Parties on the broad masses of the workers, including the members of the Social-Democratic Parties. With this as its point of departure, the Congress enjoins all Sections of the Communist International to overcome, in the shortest time possible, the sur-

vivals of sectarian traditions which have hindered them in finding a way of approach to the Social-Democratic workers, and to change the methods of agitation and propaganda, which hitherto have at times been abstract in character and hardly intelligible to the masses, by giving these methods absolutely definite direction and linking them to the immediate needs and the day-to-day interests of the masses.

4. The Seventh World Congress of the Communist International notes the serious shortcomings in the work of a number of Sections of the Communist International—the belated carrying out of the tactics of the united front, inability to mobilize the masses around partial demands political as well as economic in character, failure to realize the necessity of struggling in defence of the remnants of bourgeois democracy, failure to realize the necessity of creating an anti-imperialist People's Front in the colonial and dependent countries, disparagement of work in the reformist and fascist trade unions and mass organizations of the working people formed by bourgeois parties, underestimation of the importance of work among the working women, underestimation of the importance of work among the peasantry and the urban petty-bourgeois masses, also the delay with which the Executive Committee gave political assistance to these Sections. Taking into consideration the constantly growing importance and responsibility of the Communist Parties, which are called to head the movement of the masses in process of revolutionization, taking into consideration the necessity of concentrating day-to-day leadership within the Sections themselves, the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International directs the Executive Committee of the Communist International:

a) While shifting the main stress of its activity to the elaboration of the fundamental political and tactical lines of the world labour movement, to proceed, in deciding any question, from the concrete situation and specific conditions obtaining in each particular country, and as a rule to avoid direct intervention in internal organizational matters of the Communist Parties;

b) Systematically to assist in the formation and training of cadres and genuinely Bolshevik leaders in the Communist Parties, so that the Parties may be able at sharp turns of events independently and quickly to find, on the basis of the decisions of the Congresses of the Communist International and of the Plenums of the Executive Committee of the Communist International, correct solutions for the political and tactical problems of the Communist movement;

c) To render effective aid to the Communist Parties in their ideological struggle against political opponents;

d) To assist the Communist Parties in making use of their own experience as well as the experience of the world Communist movement, avoiding, however, the mechanical application of the experience of one country to another country and the substitution of stereotyped methods and general formulations for concrete Marxian analysis;

e) To ensure closer contact between the leading bodies of the Communist International and the various Sections of the Communist International by still more active participation on the part of authoritative representatives of the most important Sections of the Communist International in the day-to-day work of the Executive Committee of the Communist International.

5. Pointing out the underestimation, by the Young Communist Leagues as well as the Communist Parties, of the importance of mass work among the youth and the weakness of this work in a number of countries, the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International directs the Executive Committee of the Communist International and the Executive Committee of the Young Communist International to take effective measures to overcome the sectarian secludedness of a number of Young Communist League organizations, to make it the duty of the Young Communist League members to join all mass organizations of the working youth (trade union, cultural, sports organizations) formed by bourgeois-democratic, reformist and fascist parties, as well as by religious associations, and to wage a systematic struggle in these organizations to gain influence over the broad masses of the youth, mobilizing it for the struggle against militarization and forced labour camps, and for the improvement of its material conditions, for the rights of the young generation of workingmen, while striving to establish for these purposes a broad united front of all non-fascist youth mass organizations.

6. The Seventh World Congress of the Communist International notes that during the last few years, under the influence of the victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R., of the crisis in the capitalist countries, the fiendishness of German fascism and the danger of a new war, a turn of the broad masses of the workers and the labouring population in general from reformism to revolutionary struggle, from disunity and dispersion to the united front, has set in all over the world. The Seventh World Congress of the Communist International, taking into account the fact that the striving of the working people for unity of

action will continue to grow in the future, despite the resistance of individual leaders of Social-Democracy, proposes to all Sections of the Communist International, in the process of struggle for the united front of the proletariat and the people's front of all working people against the offensive of capital, against fascism and the danger of a new war, *to focus their attention on the further consolidation of their ranks and the winning over of the majority of the working class to the side of Communism.*

7. The Seventh World Congress of the Communist International points out that the *transformation of the maturing political crisis into a victorious proletarian revolution depends solely on the strength and influence of the Communist Parties among the broad masses of the proletariat, on the energy and self-sacrificing devotion of the Communists.* Now, when a political crisis is maturing in a number of capitalist countries, it is the most important, the paramount task of the Communists not to rest on the successes already achieved but to advance towards new successes, extend the contacts with the working class, gain the confidence of the millions of working people, transform the various Sections of the Communist International into mass parties, bring the majority of the working class under the influence of the Communist Parties and thus secure the conditions necessary for the victory of the proletarian revolution.

RESOLUTION ON THE REPORT OF THE INTERNATIONAL
CONTROL COMMISSION

Adopted August 1, 1935

The Seventh Congress of the Communist International:

- a) Approves the work of the International Control Commission;
- b) Accepts the financial report for the period from the Sixth to the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International.

THE FASCIST OFFENSIVE AND THE TASKS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL IN THE FIGHT FOR THE UNITY OF THE WORKING CLASS AGAINST FASCISM

*Resolution on the Report of Comrade Dimitrov
Adopted August 20, 1935*

I. FASCISM AND THE WORKING CLASS

1. The Seventh Congress of the Communist International declares that the alignment of class forces in the international arena and the tasks facing the labour movement of the world are determined by the following basic changes in the world situation:

a) *The final and irrevocable victory of socialism in the Land of the Soviets*, a victory of world importance, which has enormously enhanced the power and role of the U.S.S.R. as the bulwark of the exploited and oppressed of the whole world, and is inspiring the working people to struggle against capitalist exploitation, bourgeois reaction and fascism, for peace, and for the freedom and independence of the peoples.

b) *The most profound economic crisis in the history of capitalism*, from which the bourgeoisie has tried to extricate itself by plundering the masses of the people, by dooming tens of millions of unemployed to starvation and extinction, and by lowering the standard of living of the working people to an unprecedented extent. Despite a growth of industrial production in a number of countries and an increase in the profits of the financial magnates, the world bourgeoisie has not succeeded on the whole either in emerging from the crisis and the depression, or in checking the further accentuation of the contradictions of capitalism. In some countries (France, Belgium, etc.) the crisis is continuing, in others it has entered a state of depression,

while in those countries where production has exceeded the pre-crisis level (Japan, Great Britain) new economic upheavals are impending.

c) *The offensive of fascism, the advent to power of the fascists in Germany, the growth of the threat of a new imperialist world war and of an attack on the U.S.S.R.*, by means of which the capitalist world is seeking a way out of the impasse of its contradictions.

d) *The political crisis*, expressed in the armed struggle of the workers in Austria and Spain against the fascists, a struggle which has not yet led to the victory of the proletariat over fascism, but which prevented the bourgeoisie from consolidating its fascist dictatorship; *the powerful anti-fascist movement in France*, which began with the February demonstration and the general strike of the proletariat in 1934.

e) *The revolutionization of the working people throughout the capitalist world which is taking place under the influence of the victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R. and of the world economic crisis, also on the basis of the lessons derived from the temporary defeat of the proletariat in the central part of Europe, in Germany, as well as in Austria and Spain—that is, in countries where the majority of the organized workers supported Social-Democratic Parties. A powerful urge for unity of action is growing in the ranks of the international working class. The revolutionary movement in the colonial countries and the Soviet revolution in China are extending. The relation of class forces on a world scale is changing more and more in the direction of a growth of the forces of revolution.*

In this situation, the ruling bourgeoisie is increasingly seeking salvation in *fascism*, in the establishment of the *open, terrorist dictatorship* of the most reactionary, the most chauvinist and the most imperialist elements of finance capital, with the aim of putting into effect extraordinary measures for despoiling the working people, of preparing a predatory, imperialist war, of attacking the U.S.S.R., enslaving and dividing up China, and, on the basis of all this, averting revolution.

Finance capital is striving to curb the indignation of the petty-bourgeois masses against capitalism through the medium of its fascist agents who demagogically adapt their slogans to the moods of these sections of the population. Fascism is thus setting up for itself a mass basis and, by directing these sections as a reactionary force against the working class, leads to the still greater enslavement of all working people by finance capital. In a number of countries fascism is already in power. But the growth of fascism and its victory attest

not only to the weakness of the working class, disorganized as the result of Social-Democracy's disruptive policy of collaboration with the bourgeoisie, but also to the *weakness of the bourgeoisie itself*, which fears the realization of unity in the struggle of the working class, is afraid of revolution, and is no longer able to maintain its dictatorship by the old methods of bourgeois democracy.

2. The most reactionary variety of fascism is the *German* type of fascism, which brazenly calls itself National-Socialism, though it has absolutely nothing in common either with socialism or with the defence of the real national interests of the German people, but merely fulfils the role of lackey of the big bourgeoisie, and constitutes *not mere bourgeois nationalism but bestial chauvinism*.

Fascist Germany is plainly showing to the whole world *what* the masses of the people may expect where fascism is victorious. The raging fascist government is annihilating the flower of the working class, its leaders and organizers, in jails and concentration camps. It has destroyed the trade unions, the cooperative societies, all legal organizations of the workers as well as all other non-fascist political and cultural organizations. It has deprived the workers of the elementary right to defend their interests. It has converted a highly cultured country into a hotbed of obscurantism, barbarity and war. German fascism is the main instigator of a new imperialist war and comes forward as the *shock troop of international counter-revolution*.

3. Emphasizing the growth of the threat of fascism in all capitalist countries, the Seventh Congress of the Communist International warns against any underestimation of the fascist danger. The Congress also rejects the fatalistic views regarding the inevitability of the victory of fascism. These views are basically incorrect and can only give rise to passivity and weaken the mass struggle against fascism. The working class can prevent the victory of fascism, if it succeeds in bringing about unity in its struggle, and, by promptly developing its own militant action, does not allow fascism to gather strength; if it succeeds, by correct revolutionary leadership, in rallying around itself the broad sections of the working people in town and country.

4. The victory of fascism is insecure. In spite of the severe difficulties that fascist dictatorship creates for the working-class movement, the foundations of bourgeois domination are being further shaken under the rule of the fascists. The internal conflicts in the camp of the bourgeoisie are becoming especially acute. The legalistic illusions of the masses are being shattered. The revolutionary hatred of the workers is accumulating. The baseness and falsity of the social

demagoguery of fascism is revealing itself more and more. Fascism not only did not bring the masses the improvement in their material conditions which they had been promised, but has brought about a further increase in the profits of the capitalists by lowering the living standard of the working people, has intensified their exploitation by a handful of financial magnates, and has carried out their further spoliation for the benefit of capital. The disillusionment of the urban petty-bourgeois sections and of the labouring peasants, deceived by the fascists, is growing. The mass base of fascism is disintegrating and narrowing down. The Congress, however, warns against the dangerous illusions about an automatic collapse of the fascist dictatorship, and points out that only the *united revolutionary struggle* of the working class at the head of all the working people will bring about the overthrow of the fascist dictatorship.

5. In connection with the victory of fascism in Germany and the growth of the fascist danger in other countries, the class struggle of the proletariat, which is increasingly adopting the course of *determined resistance* to the fascist bourgeoisie, sharpened and continues to sharpen. *The united front movement* against the offensive of capital and fascism is developing in all capitalist countries. The National-Socialist terror raging in Germany has lent powerful impetus to the *international united front* of the proletariat (the Leipzig trial, the campaign for the release of Dimitrov and the comrades jailed together with him, the campaign for the defence of Thaelman and others).

Although the united front movement is as yet only in the initial stage of its development, the Communist and Social-Democratic workers of France, fighting side by side, succeeded in beating off the first attacks of fascism, thereby exerting a mobilizing influence on the united front movement internationally. The joint armed struggle of the Social-Democratic and Communist workers in Austria and Spain not only set a heroic example to the labouring masses of other countries, but also demonstrated that a successful struggle against fascism would have been fully possible but for the sabotage of the Right and wavering of the "Left" Social-Democratic leaders (in Spain there must be added the open treachery of the majority of the Anarcho-Syndicalist leaders), whose influence over the masses deprived the proletariat of determined revolutionary leadership and of clarity in the aims of the struggle.

6. The bankruptcy of the leading party of the Second International, the Social-Democratic Party of Germany, which by its entire policy facilitated the victory of fascism, also the failure of the "Left" reform-

ist Social-Democratic Party of Austria, which drew the broad masses away from the struggle even when the inevitable armed clash with fascism was drawing close, have tremendously increased the disillusionment of the Social-Democratic workers in the policy of the Social-Democratic Parties. The Second International is undergoing a profound crisis. Within the Social-Democratic Parties and the whole Second International a process of differentiation into *two main camps* is taking place: side by side with the existing camp of the *reactionary elements* who are trying to continue the policy of collaboration with the bourgeoisie, there is being formed a camp of *elements who are becoming revolutionized*, elements who declare for the establishment of the united proletarian front and are adopting more and more the position of revolutionary class struggle.

The Seventh Congress of the Communist International welcomes the aspiration of the Social-Democratic workers to establish a united front with the Communists, regarding this as a sign that their class consciousness is growing, and that a beginning has been made toward overcoming the split in the ranks of the working class in the interests of a successful struggle against fascism, against the bourgeoisie.

II. THE UNITED FRONT OF THE WORKING CLASS AGAINST FASCISM

In face of the towering menace of fascism to the working class and all the gains it has made, to all the labouring masses and their elementary rights, to the peace and liberty of the peoples, the Seventh Congress of the Communist International declares that *at the present historic stage it is the main and immediate task of the international labour movement to establish the united fighting front of the working class*. For a successful struggle against the offensive of capital, against the reactionary measures of the bourgeoisie, against fascism, the bitterest enemy of all the working people, who, without distinction of political views, have been deprived by it of all rights and liberties, it is imperative that unity of action be established between all sections of the working class, irrespective of what organization they belong to, even before the majority of the working class unites on a common fighting platform for the overthrow of capitalism and the victory of the proletarian revolution. But precisely for this reason it is the duty of the Communist Parties to take into consideration the changed circumstances and to apply the united front tactics *in a new manner*, by seeking to reach

agreements with the organizations of the working people of various political trends for joint action on a factory, local, district, national and international scale.

With this as its point of departure, the Seventh Congress of the Communist International proposes to the Communist Parties that they be guided by the following directives in carrying out the united front tactics:

1. *The defence of the immediate economic and political interests of the working class, the defence of the latter against fascism, must be the starting point and form the main content of the workers' united front in all capitalist countries. In order to set the broad masses in motion, such slogans must be put forward and such forms of struggle applied as arise from the vital needs of the masses and from the level of their fighting capacity at the given stage of development. Communists must not limit themselves to merely issuing appeals to struggle for proletarian dictatorship, but must tell the masses what they are to do today to defend themselves against capitalist plunder and fascist barbarity. They must strive, through the joint action of the labour organizations, to mobilize the masses around a program of demands that are calculated to really shift the burden of the consequences of the crisis to the shoulders of the ruling classes—of demands, the fight for whose realization will disorganize fascism, hamper the preparations for imperialist war, weaken the bourgeoisie and strengthen the positions of the proletariat.*

While preparing the working class for rapid shifts in the forms and methods of struggle as circumstances change, it is necessary to organize, in proportion as the movement grows, the transition *from the defensive to the offensive* against capital, steering toward the organization of a *mass political strike*, in which it is indispensable that the participation of the principal trade unions of the country should be secured.

2. Without for a moment giving up their independent work in the sphere of Communist education, organization and mobilization of the masses, the Communists, in order to render the road to unity of action easier for the workers, must *strive to secure joint action with the Social-Democratic Parties, reformist trade unions and other organizations of the working people against the class enemies of the proletariat, on the basis of short or long-term agreements.* At the same time, attention must be directed mainly to the development of mass action in the various localities, conducted by the *lower organizations* through local agreements.

Loyally fulfilling the conditions of the agreements, the Communists must promptly expose any sabotage of joint action by individuals or organizations participating in the united front, and if the agreement is broken, must immediately appeal to the masses while continuing their tireless struggle for the restoration of the disrupted unity of action.

3. The forms in which the proletarian united front is realized, which depend on the condition and character of the labour organizations and on the concrete situation, must be varied. Such forms may include, for instance, joint action agreed upon by the workers *from case to case on particular occasions*, to secure individual demands, or on the basis of a common platform; action agreed upon in *individual factories or branches of industry*; action agreed upon on a *local, district, national or international scale*; action agreed upon for the organization of the *economic struggle* of the workers, for the defence of the interests of the unemployed, for the carrying out of mass *political* activity, for the organization of joint *self-defence* against fascist attacks; action agreed upon to render *aid to political prisoners and their families*, and in the field of struggle against *social* reaction; joint action in defence of the *interests of the youth and women*, in the sphere of the *cooperative movement, cultural activity and sports*; joint action for the purpose of supporting the demands of the labouring peasants, etc.; the formation of workers', and workers' and peasants' alliances (Spain); the formation of lasting coalitions in the shape of "Labour Parties" or "Farmer-Labour Parties" (U.S.A.), etc.

In order to develop the united front movement as the cause of the masses themselves, Communists must strive to secure the establishment of elective (or, in the countries under fascist dictatorship, selected from the most authoritative participants in the movement) *non-partisan class organs of the united front* in the factories, among the unemployed, in the working-class districts, among the small folk in town and country. Only such bodies, which, of course, should not supplant the organizations participating in the united front, will be able to bring into the united front movement also the vast *unorganized* mass of the working people, will be able to assist in developing the initiative of the masses in the struggle against the offensive of capital and against fascism, and on this basis help to create a large body of working-class united front activists.

4. Wherever the Social-Democratic leaders, in their efforts to deflect the workers from the struggle in defence of their everyday interests and in order to frustrate the united front, put forward *widely*

advertised "socialist" projects (the de Man plan, etc.), the demagogic nature of such projects must be exposed, and the working people must be shown the impossibility of bringing about socialism so long as power remains in the hands of the bourgeoisie. At the same time, however, some of the measures put forward in these projects that can be linked up with the vital demands of the working people should be utilized as *the starting point for developing a mass united front struggle jointly with the Social-Democratic workers.*

In countries where *Social-Democratic governments* are in power (or where there are coalition governments in which Socialists participate), Communists must not confine themselves to propaganda exposing the policies of such governments, but must mobilize the broad masses for the struggle to secure their practical vital class demands, the fulfilment of which the Social-Democrats announced in their platforms, particularly when they were not yet in power or were not yet members of their respective governments.

5. Joint action with the Social-Democratic Parties and organizations not only does not preclude, but, on the contrary, *renders still more necessary* the serious and well-founded criticism of reformism, of Social-Democracy as the ideology and practice of class collaboration with the bourgeoisie, and the patient exposition of the principles and program of communism to the Social-Democratic workers.

While revealing to the masses the meaning of the demagogic arguments advanced by the Right Social-Democratic leaders against the united front, *while intensifying the struggle against the reactionary sections* of the Social-Democratic Parties, the Communists must establish *the closest cooperation with those Left Social-Democratic workers, functionaries and organizations that fight against the reformist policy and advocate a united front with the Communist Party.* The more we intensify our fight against the reactionary sections of the various Social-Democratic Parties, which are participating in a bloc with the bourgeoisie, the more effective will be the assistance we give to that part of the several Social-Democratic Parties which is becoming revolutionized. And the crystallization of the various elements within the Left camp will proceed the more rapidly, the more resolutely the Communists fight for a united front with the Social-Democratic Parties.

The attitude to the practical realization of the united front will be the chief indication of the true position of the various groups among the Social-Democrats. In the fight for the practical realization of the united front, those Social-Democratic leaders who come forward as Lefts in words will be obliged to show by deeds whether they are

really ready to fight the bourgeoisie and the Right Social-Democrats, or are on the side of the bourgeoisie, that is, against the cause of the working class.

6. *Election campaigns* must be utilized for the further development and strengthening of the united fighting front of the proletariat. While coming forward independently in the elections and unfolding the program of the Communist Party before the masses, the Communists must seek to establish a united front with the Social-Democratic Parties and the trade unions (also with the organizations of the labouring peasants, handicraftsmen, etc.), and exert every effort to prevent the election of reactionary and fascist candidates. In face of fascist danger, the Communists, *while reserving for themselves freedom of political agitation and criticism*, may, in election campaigns, *declare for a common platform and a common ticket with the anti-fascist front*, depending on the growth and success of the united front movement, and on the electoral system in operation.

7. In striving to unite, under the leadership of the proletariat, the struggle of the labouring peasants, the urban petty bourgeoisie and the toiling masses of the oppressed nationalities, the Communists must seek to bring about the establishment of a wide *anti-fascist People's Front* on the basis of the proletarian united front, supporting all those specific demands of these sections of the working people which are in line with the fundamental interests of the proletariat. It is particularly important to mobilize the *labouring peasants* against the fascist policy of robbing the basic masses of the peasantry: against the plundering price policy of monopoly capital and the bourgeois governments, against the unbearable burden of taxes, rents and debts, against forced sales of peasant property, and in favour of government aid for the ruined peasantry. While working everywhere among the *urban petty bourgeoisie and the intellectuals* as well as among the *office workers* and other non-manual employees, the Communists must rouse these sections against increasing taxation and the high cost of living, against their spoliation by monopoly capital, by the trusts, against the thralldom of interest payments, and against dismissals and reductions in salary of government and municipal employees. While defending the interests and rights of the progressive intellectuals, it is necessary to give them every support in their movement against cultural reaction, and to facilitate their going over to the side of the working class in the struggle against fascism.

8. In the circumstances of a political crisis, when the ruling classes are no longer in a position to cope with the powerful sweep of

the mass movement, the Communists must advance *fundamental* revolutionary slogans (such as, for instance, control of production and the banks, disbandment of the police force and its replacement by an armed workers' militia, etc.), which are directed toward still further shaking the economic and political power of the bourgeoisie and increasing the strength of the working class, toward isolating the parties of compromise, and leading the working masses right up to the point of the revolutionary seizure of power. If with such an upsurge of the mass movement it proves possible, and necessary in the interests of the proletariat, to create a *proletarian united front government*, or an *anti-fascist people's front government*, which is not yet a government of the proletarian dictatorship, but one which undertakes to put into effect decisive measures against fascism and reaction, the Communist Party must see to it that such a government is formed. The following situation is an essential prerequisite for the formation of a united front government: a) when the state apparatus of the bourgeoisie is seriously paralyzed so that the bourgeoisie is not in a condition to prevent the formation of such a government; b) when vast masses of the working people vehemently take action against fascism and reaction, but are not yet ready to launch the struggle for Soviet power; c) when already a considerable proportion of the organizations of the Social-Democratic and other parties participating in the united front demand ruthless measures against the fascists and other reactionaries, and are ready to fight together with the Communists for the carrying out of these measures.

If a united front government really undertakes decisive measures against the counter-revolutionary financial magnates and their fascist agents, and will in no way restrict the activity of the Communist Party and the struggle of the working class, the Communist Party will support such a government in every way. The participation of the Communists in a united front government will be decided separately in each particular case, as the concrete situation may warrant.

III. THE UNITY OF THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT

Emphasizing the special importance of forming a united front in the sphere of the economic struggle of the workers and the establishment of the unity of the trade union movement as a most important step in consolidating the united front of the proletariat, the Congress makes it a duty of the Communists to adopt all practical measures for

the realization of the unity of the trade unions by industries and on a national scale.

The Communists are decidedly for the re-establishment of trade union unity in each country and on an international scale; for single class trade unions as one of the major bulwarks of the working class against the offensive of capital and fascism; for one trade union in each industry; for one trade union federation in each country; for single international industrial trade union federations, for one international of trade unions based on the class struggle.

In countries where small Red trade unions exist, efforts must be made to secure their admission into the big reformist trade unions, with demands put forward for the right freely to defend their views, and the reinstatement of expelled members. In countries where big Red and reformist trade unions exist side by side, efforts must be made to secure their amalgamation on an equal footing, on the basis of a platform of struggle against the offensive of capital and a guarantee of trade union democracy.

It is the duty of Communists to work actively in the reformist and united trade unions, to consolidate them and recruit the unorganized workers for them, and at the same time to exert every effort to have these organizations actually defend the interests of the workers and really become genuine class organizations. To this end the Communists must strive to secure the support of the entire membership, of the functionaries, and of the organizations as a whole.

It is the duty of the Communists to defend the trade unions against all attempts on the part of the bourgeoisie and fascism to restrict their rights or to destroy them.

If the reformist leaders resort to the policy of expelling revolutionary workers or entire branches of unions, or adopt other forms of repression, the Communists must rally the entire union membership against the splitting activity of the leaders, at the same time establishing contact between the expelled members and the bulk of the members of the trade unions, and engaging in a joint struggle for their reinstatement, for the restoration of the disrupted trade union unity.

The Red trade unions and the Red International of Labour Unions must receive the fullest support of the Communist Parties in their efforts to bring about the joint struggle of the trade unions of all trends, and establish unity in the trade union movement both nationally and internationally, *on the basis of the class struggle and trade union democracy.*

IV. TASKS OF THE COMMUNISTS IN THE INDIVIDUAL SECTORS OF THE ANTI-FASCIST MOVEMENT

1. The Congress calls particular attention to the necessity of carrying on a systematic *ideological struggle against fascism*. In view of the fact that the chief, the most dangerous form of fascist ideology is *chauvinism*, it must be made plain to the masses that the fascist bourgeoisie uses the pretext of defending the national interests of all to carry out its sordid class policy of oppressing and exploiting its own people as well as robbing and enslaving other peoples. They must be shown that the working class, which fights against every form of servitude and national oppression, is *the only genuine protagonist of national freedom and the independence of the people*. The Communists must in every way combat the fascist falsification of the history of the people, and do everything to enlighten the working masses on the past of their own people in an historically correct fashion, in the true Lenin-Stalin spirit, and to link up their present struggle with the revolutionary traditions of the past. The Congress warns against adopting a disparaging attitude on the question of national independence and the national sentiments of the broad masses of the people, an attitude which renders it easier for fascism to develop its chauvinist campaigns (the Saar, the German regions in Czechoslovakia, etc.), and insists on a correct and concrete application of the Lenin-Stalin national policy.

While Communists are irreconcilable opponents, on principle, of bourgeois nationalism of every variety, they are by no means supporters of national nihilism, of an attitude of unconcern for the fate of their own people.

2. Communists must enter all *fascist mass* organizations which have a monopoly of legal existence in the given country, and must make use of even the slightest legal or semi-legal opportunity of working in them, in order to counterpose the interests of the masses in these organizations to the policy of fascism, and to undermine the mass basis of the latter. Beginning with the most elementary movements of protest around the urgent needs of the working people, the Communists must use flexible tactics to draw ever wider masses into the movement, especially workers who by reason of their lack of class consciousness still follow the fascists. As the movement gains in width and depth, the slogans of the struggle must be changed, while preparing to smash the fascist bourgeois dictatorship with the aid of the very masses that are in the fascist organizations.

3. While vigorously and consistently defending the interests and demands of the unemployed, while organizing and leading them in the fight for work, for adequate relief, insurance, etc., the Communists must draw the unemployed into the united front movement and use all means to force out the influence of fascism among them. At the same time it is necessary to take strictly into account the specific interests of the various categories of unemployed (skilled and unskilled workers, organized and unorganized, men and women, youth, etc.).

4. The Congress emphatically calls the attention of all Communist Parties of the capitalist countries to the exceptional role of the youth in the struggle against fascism. It is from among the youth that fascism mainly recruits its shock detachments. In fighting against any underestimation of the importance of *mass work among the worker youth*, and taking effective steps to overcome the secludedness of the Young Communist League organizations, the Communist Parties must do everything to help unite the forces of all non-fascist mass youth organizations, including youth organizations of the trade unions, co-operative societies, etc., on the basis of the broadest united front, including the formation of various kinds of common organizations for the struggle against fascism, against the unprecedented manner in which the youth is being stripped of every right, against the militarization of the youth, and for the economic and cultural interests of the young generation. The task of creating an anti-fascist association of Communist and Socialist youth leagues on the platform of the class struggle must be brought to the fore. The Communist Parties must give every assistance in the development and consolidation of the Young Communist Leagues.

5. The vital necessity of drawing the millions of working *women* into the united People's Front, primarily women industrial workers and working peasant women, irrespective of the political and religious views they hold, requires that the Communists intensify their activity for the purpose of developing the mass movement of the working women around the struggle for their urgent demands and interests, particularly in the struggle against the high cost of living, against inequality in the status of women and their fascist enslavement, against mass dismissals, for higher wages on the principle of "equal pay for equal work," and against the war danger. Flexible use must be made, in every country and on an international scale, of the most varied organizational forms to establish contacts between and bring about joint action of the revolutionary, Social-Democratic and progressive women's organizations, while ensuring freedom of opinion and criticism,

without hesitating to form also separate women's organizations wherever this may become necessary.

6. Communists must carry on a struggle to draw the cooperative organizations into the ranks of the united front of the proletariat and of the anti-fascist People's Front.

The most active assistance must be rendered by Communists in the struggle of the cooperative societies for the urgent interests of their members, especially in the fight against high prices, for credits, against the introduction of exorbitant tariffs and new taxes, against the restrictions imposed on the activities of the cooperative societies and their destruction by the fascists.

7. The Communists must take the initiative in establishing *anti-fascist mass self-defence corps* against the attacks of the fascist bands, recruiting these corps from reliable, tested elements of the united front movement.

V. THE ANTI-IMPERIALIST PEOPLE'S FRONT IN THE COLONIAL COUNTRIES

In the *colonial and semi-colonial countries*, the most important task facing the Communists is that of establishing an *anti-imperialist People's Front*. For this purpose it is necessary to draw the widest masses into the national liberation movement against growing imperialist exploitation, against cruel enslavement, for the driving out of the imperialists, for the independence of the country; to take an active part in the mass anti-imperialist movements headed by the national reformists and strive to bring about joint action with the national revolutionary and national reformist organizations on the basis of a definite anti-imperialist platform.

In *China*, the extension of the Soviet movement and the strengthening of the fighting power of the Red Army must be combined with the development of the people's anti-imperialist movement all over the country. This movement must be carried on under the slogan of the national-revolutionary struggle of the armed people against the imperialist enslavers, in the first place against Japanese imperialism and its Chinese servitors. The Soviets must become the rallying centre for the entire Chinese people in its struggle for emancipation.

In the interests of its own struggle for emancipation, the proletariat of the imperialist countries must give its unstinted support to the liberation struggle of the colonial and semi-colonial peoples against the imperialist pirates.

VI. THE STRENGTHENING OF THE COMMUNIST PARTIES AND THE STRUGGLE FOR THE POLITICAL UNITY OF THE WORKING CLASS

The Congress emphasizes with particular stress that only *the further all-round consolidation of the Communist Parties themselves*, the development of their initiative, the carrying out of a policy based on Marxist-Leninist principles, and the application of correct flexible tactics, which take into account the concrete situation and the alignment of class forces, can ensure the mobilization of the widest masses of the working people for the united struggle against fascism, against capitalism.

In order that the united front may be really brought about, the Communists must overcome the self-satisfied *sectarianism* in their own ranks which in our day is, in a number of cases, no longer an "infantile disorder" of the Communist movement but an ingrained vice. By overestimating the degree of revolutionization of the masses, by creating the illusion that the path had already been blocked in the way of fascism while the fascist movement was continuing to grow, this sectarianism actually fostered passivity in relation to fascism. In practice it replaced the methods of leading masses by the methods of leading a narrow party group, substituted abstract propaganda and Left doctrinarism for a mass policy, refusing to work in the reformist trade unions and fascist mass organizations, and adopting stereotyped tactics and slogans for all countries without taking account of the special features of the concrete situation in each particular country. This sectarianism to a great extent retarded the growth of the Communist Parties, made it difficult for a genuine mass policy to be carried out and hindered these Parties in making use of the difficulties of the class enemy to strengthen the revolutionary movement, hindered the cause of winning over the wide masses of the proletariat to the side of the Communist Parties.

While carrying on a most energetic struggle to root out all vestiges of sectarianism, which at the present moment is a most serious obstacle to the pursuing of a real Bolshevik mass policy by the Communist Parties, the Communists must increase their vigilance in guarding against the danger of *Right opportunism*, and must carry on a determined struggle against all its concrete manifestations, bearing in mind that the *Right danger will grow* as the tactics of the united front are widely applied. The struggle for the establishment of the united front, of the unity of action of the working class, makes it necessary that the Social-Democratic workers be convinced by

object lessons of the correctness of the Communist policy and the incorrectness of the reformist policy, and charges every Communist Party to wage an irreconcilable struggle against any tendency to gloss over the differences in principle between communism and reformism, against weakening the criticism of Social-Democracy as the ideology and practice of collaboration with the bourgeoisie, against the illusion that it is possible to bring about socialism by peaceful, legal methods, against placing any reliance on *automatism or spontaneity*, whether in the liquidation of fascism or in the realization of the united front, against belittling the role of the Party and against the slightest *vacillation at the moment of decisive action*.

Holding that the interests of the class struggle of the proletariat and the success of the proletarian revolution make it imperative that *a single mass political party of the working class* exist in each country, the Congress sets the Communist Parties the task of taking the initiative in bringing about this unity, relying on the growing desire of the workers to unite the Social-Democratic Parties or individual organizations with the Communist Parties. At the same time it must be explained to the workers without fail that such unity is possible only on certain conditions: on condition of *complete independence from the bourgeoisie and the complete disruption of the bloc between the Social-Democratic Parties and the bourgeoisie*, on the condition that *unity of action* be first brought about, that the necessity of the *revolutionary overthrow of the rule of the bourgeoisie and the establishment of the dictatorship of the proletariat in the form of Soviets* be recognized, that support of one's own bourgeoisie in *imperialist war* be rejected, and that the party be constructed on the basis of *democratic centralism*, which ensures unity of will and action and has been tested by the experience of the Russian Bolsheviks.

At the same time it is necessary to act resolutely against the attempts of the "Left" Social-Democratic demagogues to utilize the disillusionment among the Social-Democratic workers to form new Socialist Parties and a new "International," which are directed against the communist movement and thus widen the split in the working class.

Considering that unity of action is an urgent necessity and the surest way to bring about the political unity of the proletariat, the Seventh Congress of the Communist International declares in the name of all Sections of the Communist International that they are ready to *begin immediate negotiations with the corresponding parties of the Second International* for the establishment of unity of action of

the working class against the offensive of capital, against fascism and the threat of imperialist war, and likewise declares that *the Communist International is ready to enter into negotiations with the Second International directed to this end.*

VII. FOR SOVIET POWER!

In the struggle to defend against fascism the bourgeois-democratic liberties and the gains of the working people, in the struggle to overthrow fascist dictatorship, the revolutionary proletariat prepares its forces, strengthens its fighting contacts with its allies and directs the struggle toward the goal of achieving real democracy of the working people—*Soviet power.*

The further consolidation of the Land of Soviets, the rallying of the world proletariat around it, and the mighty growth of the international authority of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks), the turn toward revolutionary class struggle which has set in among the Social-Democratic workers and the workers organized in the reformist trade unions, the increasing mass resistance to fascism and the growth of the revolutionary movement in the colonies, the decline of the Second International and the growth of the Communist International, *are all accelerating and will continue to accelerate the development of the world socialist revolution.*

The capitalist world is entering a period of sharp clashes as a result of the accentuation of the internal and external contradictions of capitalism.

Steering a course in the direction of this perspective of the revolutionary development, the Seventh Congress of the Communist International calls on the Communist Parties to display the greatest political activity and daring, to carry on a tireless struggle to bring about unity of action by the working class. *The establishment of the united front of the working class is the decisive link in the preparation of the working people for the forthcoming great battles of the second round of proletarian revolutions.* Only the welding of the proletariat into a single mass political army will ensure its victory in the struggle against fascism and the rule of capital, for the dictatorship of the proletariat and Soviet power. *"The victory of revolution never comes by itself. It has to be prepared for and won. And only a strong proletarian revolutionary party can prepare for and win victory."* (Stalin.)

THE TASKS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL IN CONNECTION WITH THE PREPARATIONS OF THE IMPERIALISTS FOR A NEW WORLD WAR

*Resolution on the Report of Comrade Ercoli
Adopted August 20, 1935*

I. THE PREPARATION OF WAR FOR A NEW PARTITION OF THE WORLD

The world economic crisis and the shattering of capitalist stabilization have given rise to extreme instability in all international relations. The intensified struggle on the world market, which has shrunk extremely as a result of the economic crisis, has passed into fierce economic war. *A new partition of the world has in fact already begun.*

Japanese imperialism, waging war in the Far East, has already made a start toward a repartition of the world. The military occupation of Manchuria and North China signifies the virtual annulment of the *Washington Treaties* which regulated the division of the spheres of influence among the imperialist powers in China and their mutual relations in the Pacific. Japan's rapacious expedition is already leading to the weakening of the influence of British and American imperialism in China, is menacing the position of Great Britain and the U.S.A. in the Pacific and is preparing for a counter-revolutionary war against the Soviet Union.

All that is left of the *Versailles Treaty* is state frontiers and the distribution of mandates for colonies. The liquidation of the Versailles Treaty took place as a result of the stoppage of reparation payments, the re-establishment of universal conscription by the Hitler government, as well as the conclusion of the naval agreement between Britain and Germany.

Being the chief instigators of war, the German fascists, who strive for the hegemony of German imperialism in Europe, raise the question of changing the boundaries of Europe at the expense of their neighbours by means of war. The adventurist plans of the German fascists are very far-reaching and count on a war of revenge against France, dismemberment of Czechoslovakia, annexation of Austria, destruction of the independence of the Baltic states, which they are striving to convert into a base for attack on the Soviet Union, and the wresting of the Soviet Ukraine from the U.S.S.R. They are demanding colonies and are endeavouring to stir up sentiment in favour of a world war for a repartition of the world. All these intrigues of the reckless inciters of war help to intensify the contradictions between the capitalist states and create unrest throughout Europe.

German imperialism has found an ally in Europe—*Polish fascism* which is also striving to extend its territory at the expense of Czechoslovakia, the Baltic countries and the Soviet Union.

The dominant circles of the *British bourgeoisie* support the German armaments in order to weaken the hegemony of France on the European continent, to turn the spearhead of German armaments from the West to the East and to direct Germany's aggressiveness against the Soviet Union. By this policy Great Britain is striving to set up a counterbalance to the United States on a world-wide scale and, simultaneously, to strengthen the anti-Soviet tendencies not only of Germany but also of Japan and Poland. This policy of British imperialism is one of the factors accelerating the outbreak of a world imperialist war.

Italian imperialism is directly proceeding to the seizure of Abyssinia, thus creating new tension in the relations between the great imperialist powers.

The main contradiction in the camp of the imperialists is the Anglo-American antagonism, which exerts its influence on all the contradictions in world politics. In South America, where the hostile interests of Great Britain and the United States clash most sharply, this antagonism led to wars between the respective South American vassals of these powers (between Bolivia and Paraguay, Colombia and Peru), and threatens further armed conflicts in Central and South America (Colombia and Venezuela).

At a time when particularly the fascist states—Germany, Poland, Hungary, Italy—are openly striving for a new partition of the world and a change in the frontiers of Europe, there is a tendency among a number of other countries to maintain the *status quo*. At the pres-

ent time this tendency is represented on a world scale by the United States; in Europe, primarily by France; the efforts of these two leading imperialist powers to maintain the *status quo* are supported by several smaller countries (the Little and Balkan Ententes, some of the Baltic states), whose independence is threatened by a new imperialist war.

The victory of German National-Socialism, the most reactionary, the most aggressive form of fascism, and its war provocations have spurred on the war parties, which represent the most reactionary and chauvinist elements of the bourgeoisie, to fight in all countries more vigorously for power and to intensify the fascization of the state apparatus.

The frantic arming of fascist Germany, especially the restoration of military conscription and the enormous increase of the navy and air fleet in Germany, have given rise to a new, intensified *race for armaments* throughout the capitalist world. Despite the world economic crisis, the war industry flourishes more than ever before. The countries which have gone farthest in preparing for war (Germany, Japan, Italy, Poland) have already placed their national economy on a war footing. Alongside the regular armies, special fascist detachments are trained to safeguard the rear and to do gendarme service at the front. Pre-conscription training is widespread in all capitalist countries, and even includes juveniles. *Education* and *propaganda* in the spirit of chauvinist racial demagoguery are encouraged in every way, their cost being defrayed by the government.

Although the acuteness of the imperialist contradictions renders the formation of an anti-Soviet bloc difficult at the present moment, the fascist governments and war parties in the capitalist countries endeavour to solve these contradictions at the expense of the fatherland of all the working people, at the expense of the Soviet Union. The danger of the outbreak of a new imperialist war daily threatens humanity.

II. THE ROLE OF THE SOVIET UNION IN THE STRUGGLE FOR PEACE

On the basis of the rapid rise of socialist industry and agriculture, on the basis of the abolition of the last capitalist class, the kulaks, on the basis of the final victory of socialism over capitalism and the strengthening of the defensive power of the country resulting therefrom, *the mutual relations between the Soviet Union and the capitalist countries have entered a new phase.*

The basic contradiction, that between the socialist and the capital-

ist world, has become still more acute. But due to its growing might, the Soviet Union has been able to avert the attack that was already prepared by the imperialist powers and their vassals, and to unfold its consistent policy of peace directed against all instigators of war. This has made the Soviet Union the centre of attraction not only for class conscious workers, but for all the working people in the capitalist and colonial countries who strive for peace. Moreover, the peace policy of the U.S.S.R. has not only upset the plans of the imperialists to isolate the Soviet Union, but has laid the basis for its cooperation in the cause of the preservation of peace *with the small states* to whom war represents a special danger, by placing their independence in jeopardy, as well as with those governments which at the *present moment* are interested in the preservation of peace.

The peace policy of the U.S.S.R., putting forward proletarian internationalism as against national and racial dissension, is not only directed toward the defence of the Land of Soviets, toward ensuring the safety of socialist construction; it also protects the lives of the workers of all countries, the lives of all the oppressed and exploited; it means the defence of the national independence of small nations, it serves the vital interests of humanity, it defends culture from the barbarities of war.

At the time when a new war between the imperialist states is approaching ever more closely, the might of the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army of the U.S.S.R. is constantly gaining in importance in the struggle for peace. Under the circumstances of a frantic increase in armaments by the imperialist countries, especially on the part of Germany, Japan and Poland, all those who are striving to preserve peace are vitally interested in strengthening and actively supporting the Red Army.

III. THE TASKS OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL IN THE STRUGGLE FOR PEACE AND AGAINST IMPERIALIST WAR

On the basis of the teaching of Marx-Engels-Lenin-Stalin on war, the Sixth World Congress of the Communist International concretely formulated the tasks of the Communist Parties and the revolutionary proletariat in the struggle against imperialist war. Guided by these principles, the Communist Parties of Japan and China, both directly affected by war, have waged and are waging a Bolshevik struggle against imperialist war and for the defence of the Chinese people. *The Seventh World Congress of the Communist International,*

confirming the decisions of the Sixth Congress on the struggle against imperialist war, sets the following main tasks before the Communist Parties, the revolutionary workers, the labouring people, peasants and oppressed nations of the whole world.

1. *The struggle for peace and for the defence of the U.S.S.R.* In face of the war provocations of the German fascists and Japanese militarists, and the speeding up of armaments by the war parties in the capitalist countries, in face of the immediate danger of a counter-revolutionary war breaking out against the Soviet Union, the *central slogan* of the Communist Parties must be: struggle for peace.

2. *The united People's Front in the struggle for peace and against the instigators of war.* The struggle for peace opens up before the Communist Parties the greatest opportunities for creating the broadest united front. All those interested in the preservation of peace should be drawn into this united front. The concentration of forces against the chief instigators of war at any given moment (at the present time—against fascist Germany, and against Poland and Japan, which are in league with it) constitutes the most important tactical task of the Communist Parties. It is of especially great importance for the Communist Party of Germany to expose the nationalist demagoguery of Hitler fascism, which screens itself behind phrases about the unification of the German people but in fact leads to the isolation of the German people and to a new war catastrophe. The overthrow of Hitler fascism is an indispensable condition and prerequisite for the unification of the German people. The establishment of a united front with Social-Democratic and reformist organizations (party, trade union, cooperative, sports, and cultural and educational organizations) and with the bulk of their members, also with mass national-liberation, religious-democratic and pacifist organizations and their adherents, is of decisive importance for the struggle against war and its fascist instigators in all countries.

The formation of a united front with *Social-Democratic and reformist* organizations for the struggle for peace necessitates a determined ideological struggle against the reactionary elements within the Social-Democratic Parties which, in face of the immediate danger of war, proceed to collaborate even more closely with the bourgeoisie for the defence of the bourgeois fatherland, and by their campaigns of slander against the Soviet Union directly aid the preparations for an anti-Soviet war. It necessitates close collaboration with those forces in the Social-Democratic Parties, reformist trade unions and other mass work-

ing-class organizations whose position is approaching ever closer to that of revolutionary struggle against imperialist war.

The drawing of pacifist organizations and their adherents into the united front of struggle for peace acquires great importance in mobilizing the petty-bourgeois masses, progressive intellectuals, women and youth against war. While constantly subjecting the erroneous views of sincere pacifists to constructive criticism, and vigorously combating those pacifists who by their policy screen the preparations of the German fascists for imperialist war (the leadership of the Labour Party in Great Britain, etc.), the Communists must invite the collaboration of all pacifist organizations that are prepared to go with them even if only part of the way towards a genuine struggle against imperialist wars.

The Communists must support the Amsterdam-Pleyel anti-war and anti-fascist movement by active collaboration with it and help to extend it.

3. *The combination of the struggle against imperialist war with the struggle against fascism.* The anti-war struggle of the masses striving to preserve peace must be very closely combined with the struggle against fascism and the fascist movement. It is necessary to conduct not only general propaganda for peace, but primarily propaganda directed against the chief instigators of war, against the fascist and other imperialist war parties, and against concrete measures of preparation for imperialist war.

4. *The struggle against militarism and armaments.* The Communist Parties of all capitalist countries must fight: against military expenditures (war budgets), for the recall of military forces from the colonies and mandated territories, against militarization measures taken by capitalist governments, especially the militarization of the youth, women and the unemployed, against emergency decrees restricting bourgeois-democratic liberties with the aim of preparing for war; against restricting the rights of workers employed in war industry plants; against subsidizing the war industry and against trading in or transporting arms. The struggle against war preparation measures can be conducted only in closest connection with the defence of the economic interests and political rights of the workers and other employees, the labouring peasants and urban lower middle classes.

5. *The struggle against chauvinism.* In the struggle against chauvinism the task of the Communists consists in educating the workers and the whole of the toiling population in the spirit of proletarian internationalism. This can be accomplished only in the struggle

against the exploiters and oppressors for the vital class interests of the proletariat, as well as in the struggle against the bestial chauvinism of the National-Socialist Parties and all other fascist parties. At the same time the Communists must show that the working class carries on a consistent struggle in defence of the national freedom and independence of the whole people against any oppression or exploitation, because only the Communist policy defends to the very end the national freedom and independence of the people of one's own country.

6. *The national-liberation struggle and the support of wars of national liberation.* If any weak state is attacked by one or more big imperialist powers which want to destroy its national independence and national unity or to dismember it, as in the historic instance of the partition of Poland, a war conducted by the national bourgeoisie of such a country to repel this attack may assume the character of a war of liberation, in which the working class and the Communists of that country must intervene. It is the task of the Communists of such a country, while carrying on an irreconcilable struggle to safeguard the economic and political positions of the workers, labouring peasants and national minorities, to be, at the same time, in the front ranks of the fighters for national independence and to fight the war of liberation to a finish, without allowing "their" bourgeoisie to strike a bargain with the attacking powers to the prejudice of the interests of their country.

It is the duty of the Communists actively to support the national liberation struggle of the oppressed peoples of the colonial and semi-colonial countries, especially the Red Army of the Chinese Soviets, in their struggle against the Japanese and other imperialists and the Kuomintang. The Communist Party of China must exert every effort to extend the front of the struggle for national liberation and to draw into it all the national forces that are ready to repulse the robber campaign of the Japanese and other imperialists.

IV. FROM THE STRUGGLE FOR PEACE TO THE STRUGGLE FOR REVOLUTION

The Seventh World Congress of the Communist International most determinedly repudiates the slanderous contention that Communists desire war, expecting it to bring revolution. The leading role of the Communist Parties of all countries in the struggle for the preservation of peace, for the triumph of the peace policy of the Soviet Union,

proves that the Communists are striving with all their might to obstruct the preparations for and the unleashing of a new war.

The Communists, while fighting energetically also against the illusion that war can be eliminated while the capitalist system still exists, are exerting and will exert every effort to prevent war. Should a new imperialist world war break out, despite all efforts of the working class to prevent it, the Communists will strive to lead the opponents of war, organized in the struggle for peace, to the struggle for the transformation of the imperialist war into civil war against the fascist instigators of war, against the bourgeoisie, for the overthrow of capitalism.

The Congress at the same time warns Communists and all revolutionary workers against anarcho-syndicalist methods of struggle against war, which take the form of refusing to appear for military service, the form of a so-called boycott of mobilization, of committing sabotage in war plants, etc. The Congress considers that such methods of struggle only do harm to the proletariat. During the World War the Russian Bolsheviks fought energetically against war and were for the defeat of the Russian government. However, they rejected such methods; for these methods merely make it easier for the bourgeoisie to take repressive measures against Communists and revolutionary workers, and prevent the latter from winning over the labouring masses, especially the soldier masses, to the side of the mass struggle against imperialist war and for its transformation into civil war against the bourgeoisie.

The Seventh Congress of the Communist International, in outlining the tasks of the Communist Parties and of the entire working class in the event of war, bases itself upon the thesis advanced by Lenin and Rosa Luxemburg and adopted by the Stuttgart Congress of the pre-war Second International:

"If nevertheless war breaks out, it is their duty to work for its speedy termination and to strive with all their might to utilize the economic and political crisis produced by the war to rouse the masses of the people and thereby hasten the downfall of capitalist class rule."

At the present historical juncture, when on one-sixth part of the globe the Soviet Union defends socialism and peace for all humanity, the most vital interests of the workers and the labouring masses of all countries demand that in pursuing the policy of the working class, in waging the struggle for peace, the struggle against imperialist war

before and after the outbreak of hostilities, the defence of the Soviet Union must be considered paramount.

If the commencement of a counter-revolutionary war forces the Soviet Union to set the Workers' and Peasants' Red Army in motion for the defence of socialism, the Communists will call upon all toilers *to work, with all the means at their disposal and at any price, for the victory of the Red Army over the armies of the imperialists.*

THE VICTORY OF SOCIALISM IN THE U.S.S.R. AND ITS HISTORIC INTERNATIONAL SIGNIFICANCE

*Resolution on the Report of Comrade Manuilsky
Adopted August 20, 1935*

Having heard Comrade Manuilsky's report on the results of socialist construction in the U.S.S.R., the Seventh World Congress of the Communist International notes with profound satisfaction that, under the leadership of the C.P.S.U.(B), as a result of carrying through the socialist reconstruction of the national economy, of accomplishing the collectivization of agriculture, of squeezing out the capitalist elements and eliminating the kulaks as a class, the final and irrevocable victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R. and the all-round consolidation of the state of the proletarian dictatorship have been achieved.

1. *Socialist industrialization has been successfully carried through.* The U.S.S.R. has changed from an economically and technically backward, agrarian country into a great, advanced, industrial country with its iron and steel production, machinery construction, aviation, automobile and tractor industry, and is becoming a country of electric power and chemical industries. The U.S.S.R. is in a position to manufacture in its plants any machine, any instrument of production. Big industrial towns have sprung up in formerly uninhabited places. The old industrial areas are expanding and new ones are being created. The formerly backward outlying regions and the erstwhile tsarist colonies are being successfully industrialized and, as a result, are being transformed into flourishing, advanced industrial national republics and territories. Highly skilled cadres of technicians, organizers and executives have been trained for the numerous and diversified industries and processes of production. The successes already achieved provide new great possibilities for the further growth of the industrialization of the entire national economy of the U.S.S.R.

2. *A very great revolution has been successfully accomplished in the countryside: the collectivization of agriculture.* With the triumph of the collective farm system, the extremely difficult problem of turning the vast majority of the peasantry onto the path of socialist development has been solved in practice. Large-scale mechanized agriculture, organized along socialist lines, has been established. The network of machine and tractor stations is extending. The state farms are gaining strength. The material and productive advantages of the collective farm system have already become a stimulus to the further consolidation of the collective farms and to the extension of voluntary collectivization. The grain problem has been solved. Livestock raising has improved and is steadily on the upgrade. Thanks to the collective and state farms, the existence of vast stretches of hitherto uncultivated fertile soil and the turn that has set in to intensive methods of agriculture, accompanied by an ever-increasing application of the technique and scientific principles of farming, guarantee the possibility of the development of socialist agriculture on a tremendous scale in the U.S.S.R.

3. *A radical improvement in the material conditions of the working people in the U.S.S.R. and a tremendous rise of their cultural level has been achieved.* Unemployment has disappeared. Workers and other employees are growing in number and becoming more skilled. Pay rolls and social insurance funds as well as individual wages and social insurance benefits are rising (sanatoriums, rest homes, free medical aid, invalid and old age pensions, etc.). The working day has been reduced to seven and, for some categories, to six hours, and the conditions of labour are progressively improving. Food supply difficulties are being successfully overcome (abolition of bread cards; the growing supply of meats and fats for the working people, as livestock raising keeps on developing). The big cities and industrial centres have changed their appearance. The housing and living conditions of the working people are steadily improving; in place of the slums which are characteristic of the working-class quarters in the big cities and industrial centres under capitalism, spacious, light and sanitary workers' homes have already been built and more are being built. Thanks to the collectivization of agriculture and the elimination of the kulaks as a class, destitution has vanished from the villages, the peasants have secured the opportunity for a well-to-do life and for work under conditions that do not exhaust but invigorate them.

Solicitude for people, for those who toil, for cadres and, above all, solicitude for the children, occupies a central place in the activi-

ties of the Party, the state, all trade union and other public organizations. The cultural level of the working people is rising fast. In all the republics of the Soviet Union universal compulsory elementary education, conducted in their native language, in the language of the particular nationality, has been introduced. Millions of children of workers and peasants, of office and other employees are studying in the secondary schools and universities. A vast network of educational institutions for children under school age, and a system of specialized evening schools, circles and courses of adult education have been set up. Tens of thousands of clubs, theatres and motion picture houses have been built in working-class districts, at factories, in villages. The development and flourishing of the culture, national in form and socialist in content, of the peoples of the U.S.S.R. which were formerly oppressed, downtrodden and doomed to degeneration, but are now free and equal, proceeds apace. Women actively participate in socialist construction on an equal footing with men. Young generations which have grown up under Soviet conditions, which have not known capitalist exploitation or want and deprivation of rights, and recognize only the interests, tasks and aims of socialism, are entering into the construction of socialism. Science and all forms of art have been made accessible to the broadest masses. Academicians, scientists, research workers, actors, writers, painters and masters of every other branch of art have turned to the side of the working people. No matter how vast all these material and cultural achievements may be, compared with the recent past and with the position of the working people in capitalist countries today, they represent merely the beginning of that splendid near future, fully flourishing and abounding in universal well-being, toward which the Land of Socialism is advancing.

4. *A great political consolidation of the state of the proletarian dictatorship has been achieved.* The Land of the Soviets has the most stable, the most impregnable political order. It is a state of fully developed democracy, not divorced from the masses of the people nor placed in opposition to them, but organically connected with them, defending their interests, expressing their will and carrying it into effect. The profound, radical changes which have taken place in the social structure of the U.S.S.R. as a result of the socialist reconstruction of its national economy, the abolition of the exploiting classes and the victory of the collective farm system have brought about a further expansion and strengthening of the social foundation of the Soviet power. In accordance with these changes and relying on the increased confidence of the broad masses in the dictatorship of the

proletariat, the Soviet government has carried out new measures of great historic significance which further democratize its system: the substitution of equal suffrage for the previously not entirely equal suffrage, direct for indirect elections, the secret for the open ballot; the extension of electoral rights to include new sections of the adult population; the restoration of electoral rights to those of the former kulaks who have shown in actual fact, by honest labour, that they have ceased to fight against the Soviet order. The dictatorship of the proletariat is steadily developing along the road of constantly strengthening and extending the direct connections of the Soviet state with the masses of the people, with the overwhelming majority of the population, along the road of enhancing the universal and active direct participation of the masses of the people in the administration of the state and the direction of socialist construction. The development of proletarian democracy—which has been attained as a consequence of the abolition of the exploiting classes, of the consolidation of socialist ownership as the basis of Soviet society, and of the realization of the unity of interests of the vast majority of the population in all the republics of the Soviet Union—enormously strengthens the state of the proletarian dictatorship.

True to its principles of the brotherhood, freedom and independence of all peoples and nations, the Soviet Union unswervingly fights for the preservation of peace between nations, exposes the aggressive plans of the imperialist robbers and takes all the necessary steps to ensure the defence of the socialist fatherland of the working people of the whole world against the menace of a predatory attack by the imperialists. The Seventh Congress of the Communist International records with satisfaction that in place of old tsarist Russia, a country beaten by all, in place of the weak Soviet country which, in the early days of its development, was faced with the threat of partition by the imperialists, a *mighty, socialist state* has now arisen.

The U.S.S.R. is becoming a country of the new man, of a new social and individual mode of human life. In the great workshop of planned socialist labour, founded on socialist emulation, on shock work and the creative initiative of the masses, a great process of remaking people is taking place. The mercenary and anti-social ethics and habits peculiar to the ownership of private property and inherited from capitalism are gradually disappearing. The atmosphere of enthusiastic socialist labour aids the re-education of criminals and lawbreakers. The principle of the inviolability of public property in every branch of the national economy, in town and country, is becoming part of life.

The public opinion of the working people and the practice of self-criticism have become a mighty factor for moral suasion, for bringing up people and re-educating them. On the basis of the new attitude toward work and society that is gaining firm hold, a new mode of life is being created, the consciousness and psychology of people are being remoulded, new generations, healthy, able-bodied and of universal development, are coming into being. From the very midst of the people, organizers, leaders, inventors, bold explorers of the uncharted elements of the Arctic, heroic conquerors of the stratosphere, the air and the depths of the sea, of the summits of the mountains and the bowels of the earth, are coming forth in vast numbers. Millions of working people are storming and mastering the inaccessible citadels of technique, science and art. The U.S.S.R. is becoming a country of new people, full of purpose, buoyancy and the joy of living, surmounting all difficulties, performing great feats.

5. *The victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R. was achieved in a determined struggle by the Communist Party of the Soviet Union (Bolsheviks) against Right and "Left" opportunism, in a stubborn and protracted struggle to overcome the enormous difficulties which arose because of the low level of technical and economic development inherited by the country, and because of the need to achieve, in a very brief space of time, by its own forces and means, and under conditions of hostile encirclement by imperialists, the reconstruction of the technical foundation of the national economy and the fundamental reorganization of social and economic relations. The carrying out of this readjustment, and especially the rebuilding of the technical base of agriculture, which was connected with the uniting of small peasant farms into large collective farms and the elimination of the kulaks as a class, meant a resolute attack by the proletariat on the capitalist elements. As they lost every economic foundation, the remnants of the exploiting classes, backed by the imperialists, offered desperate resistance, resorted to sabotage, wrecking, the burning of crops, the disruption of sowing campaigns, the extermination of cattle, etc. The proletariat succeeded in crushing the resistance of its enemies, creating a powerful socialist industry, consolidating the collective farm system, surmounting the difficulties connected with the need for the rapid advancement of the national economy. The possibility of building up socialism in a single country, brilliantly foreseen by Lenin and Stalin, has become a reality, palpable and tangible for millions of people throughout the world. The historic question of "who will win" in the internal arena, the question*

of the victory of socialism over capitalism in the U.S.S.R., has been finally and irrevocably decided in favour of socialism. This does not exclude the possibility that the remnants of the routed class enemy, who have lost all hope of preventing the development of socialism, will do whatever harm they can to the workers and collective farmers of the U.S.S.R.

The further development of triumphant socialism will be accompanied in the U.S.S.R. by difficulties of a different order, difficulties arising out of the need to overcome the survivals of capitalism in the minds of people. With the victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R. the world proletarian revolution has gained impregnable positions in the sharpening struggle to decide the question of "who will win" in the international arena.

6. *The victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R. is a victory of world importance. Gained with the support of the international proletariat by the workers and collective farmers of the U.S.S.R. under the leadership of the best companion-in-arms of the great Lenin, the wise leader of the working people of the whole world, Comrade Stalin, the victory of socialism in the U.S.S.R. is causing a profound change in the minds of the working people of all countries; it is convincing the broadest masses of Social-Democratic workers and workers of other trends of the necessity of waging a common struggle for socialism, and is a decisive factor in the realization of proletarian fighting unity; it is destroying ideas and conceptions, fostered for centuries, of the capitalist order being eternal and unshakable, is revealing the bankruptcy of bourgeois theories and schemes to "rejuvenate" capitalist society, is having a revolutionizing effect on the masses of the working people, imbuing them with confidence in their own strength and instilling in them the conviction that the overthrow of capitalism and the construction of socialism are necessary and practically possible. The road of salvation, the road of socialism, already paved by the U.S.S.R., shines brightly as a living example before the millions of working people in the capitalist and colonial countries, before all the exploited and oppressed.*

The Soviet order, the socialist order of society, guarantees:

To the workers—liberation from the horrors of unemployment and capitalist exploitation, the opportunity to work for themselves and not for exploiters, for parasites, to administer the state and the national economy, to steadily improve their material conditions, to lead a cultured life.

To the peasants—land, and freedom from bondage to landlords,

moneylenders and bankers, from unbearable taxes; liberation from crises, ruin, degradation and destitution; a steady rise in their prosperity and cultural standards; a thoroughgoing lightening of their labour.

To the small townsfolk—liberation from the nightmare of bankruptcy, from the oppression of big capital, from ruin and degeneration; the opportunity of finding a place as honest working people in the system of socialist economy, of bringing about a radical improvement in their material and spiritual life.

To the intellectuals—the necessary conditions and the widest scope for the perfection of their knowledge, capabilities and talents; great impulses and wide horizons for creative work; a radical improvement in their material and cultural life.

To the peoples of the colonies and dependencies—national emancipation from the yoke of the imperialists; the possibility of rapidly raising their national economy to the level of the most advanced countries; the advancement and flourishing of their national culture; free and equal active participation in international life.

7. With the victory of socialism, the U.S.S.R. has become a great political, economic and cultural state force which influences world policy. It has become the centre of attraction and the rallying point for all peoples, countries and even states which are interested in the preservation of international peace. It has become the stronghold of the working people of all countries against the menace of war. It has become a mighty weapon for rallying the working people of the whole world against world reaction.

The victory of socialism, having transformed the U.S.S.R. into a force which sets in motion wide sections of the population, classes, nations, peoples and states, marks a new, great change in the relation of class forces on a world scale in favour of socialism, to the detriment of capitalism; it marks the beginning of a new stage in the development of the world proletarian revolution.

From the historic balance of achievements secured since the Sixth Congress of the Communist International, the balance with which the world proletarian movement is approaching the second round of wars and revolutions and which determines the basic tasks of the world proletarian revolution, follows the primary duty of the working class and the labouring people of the world and of all Sections of the Communist International:

To help with all their might and with all the means at their disposal to strengthen the U.S.S.R. and to fight against the enemies of the U.S.S.R. Both under peace conditions and in the conditions of

war directed against the U.S.S.R., the strengthening of the U.S.S.R., the increasing of its power, and the assuring of its victory in all spheres and in every sector of the struggle coincide fully and inseparably with the interests of the working people of the whole world in their struggle against the exploiters, and with the interests of the colonial and oppressed peoples fighting against imperialism; they are the conditions for, and they contribute to, the triumph of the world proletarian revolution, the victory of socialism throughout the world. Assistance to the U.S.S.R., its defence, and cooperation in bringing about its victory over all its enemies must therefore determine the actions of every revolutionary organization of the proletariat, of every genuine revolutionary, of every Socialist, Communist, non-party worker, labouring peasant, of every honest intellectual and democrat, of each and every person desiring the annihilation of exploitation, fascism and imperialist oppression, desiring salvation from imperialist wars, desiring brotherhood and peace among nations, and the triumph of socialism throughout the world.

DECISION ON THE ADMISSION OF NEW PARTIES INTO THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

Adopted August 20, 1935

a) To admit the Communist Parties of Indo-China, the Philippines, Peru, Colombia, Costa Rica, Porto Rico and Venezuela as Sections of the Communist International;

b) To admit the People's Revolutionary Party of Tuwa as a Section of the Communist International with the rights of a sympathizing party.

DECISION ON CHANGING THE RULES OF THE COMMUNIST INTERNATIONAL

Adopted August 20, 1935

The Congress charges the Executive Committee to revise the Rules of the Communist International on the basis of the Resolution on the Report of the Executive Committee, and to prepare the corresponding changes in the Rules in time for the next world congress of the Communist International.